

110,000 displaced in south Sudan

NAIROBI (R) — Sudanese rebels are struggling to hold back a major onslaught by government troops and warplanes which is driving at least 110,000 civilians towards the southern frontier with Uganda, aid workers said in Nairobi. "We are fighting them," rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) official Justin Nyach told Reuters. But he added: "We can do nothing about the attacks from the air ... I don't know if we have enough forces to hold them back (on the ground)." Relief sources said government forces moving south from their garrison in the southern capital Juba in a push to cut rebel supply lines from Uganda had forced SPLA fighters to fall back from their positions at Kit, near the Ugandan border. The offensive, which gained pace last week as the dry season set in, has caused panic among tens of thousands of refugees in camps south of Kit who are now trekking south towards Uganda. Some 41,000 people have already started fleeing the camp of Ame, where four people were killed in an attack by gunmen last week.

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Talal Al Hassan heads for Jakarta

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan said Sunday the presidency council of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) will discuss the situation in Bosnia among other main topics at a meeting to be held in Jakarta this week. Speaking to Jordan Television shortly before leaving for the meeting, Mr. Hassan said that the ministerial-level meeting would also discuss the situation in Somalia and the Middle East peace process. Other topics include South-South and North-South relations, the next NAM foreign ministers' meeting and a number of economic issues of concern to the movement. The minister said that he would speak about Jordan's role in the Middle East peace process and the Kingdom's efforts for peace.

3 French remain captive in Yemen

SANA'A (AP) — Three French tourists kidnapped by Yemeni tribesmen with grievances against the Sanaa government began a third week in captivity Sunday. The hostages have been identified as retired agriculture teachers Henri Heslot and his wife, and 42-year-old cardiologist Brigitte Fonzaine. They were abducted Jan. 23 on their way to Sanaa from the northern town of Saada in a six-car convoy of tourists. The kidnappers belong to the Ahnoum tribe in the Bani Nauf region of the northern Haga province. The tribesmen are angry that a road being built in the area bypasses their region. Officials led by Interior Minister Yehya Al Mutawakil have been trying to negotiate the release of the hostages, an army brigade has ringed the kidnappers' hideout.

Turkish planes bomb rebel Kurds in Iraq

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish air force planes and helicopter gunships pounded rebel Kurds along border areas in northern Iraq on Sunday, Anatolia news agency reported. Quoting the regional emergency governor's office, Anatolia said the planes and helicopters attacked two separate regions after large groups of armed separatist Kurds were spotted. It was the second major raid by Turkish air force planes on the guerrillas in two weeks. Last month more than 50 Turkish aircraft attacked a camp used by Kurdish guerrillas inside northern Iraq. Nine Iranians were killed in error when a Turkish missile landed in Iranian territory, Iran said. Anatolia said the raids on Sunday were carried out on the Mezzi and Karyaderi regions.

Israel decides on 'open skies' policy

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel, clipping the wings of its national airline El Al, announced an "open skies" policy on Sunday to boost the number of visitors to the Jewish state. Under the plan adopted by the government, foreign airlines operating in Israel can raise the number of their regularly scheduled flights by 60 per cent. Charter operators can increase their flights by 25 per cent, government officials said. Until now, the number of flights by a foreign airline on a given line could not exceed the number flown by El Al. The "open skies" policy, the first such aviation reform in 15 years, is due to go into effect in three weeks. Tourism Minister Uzi Baran said there would also be open price competition among the airlines.

9 women, 3 children gunned down in Natal

DURBAN (R) — A gang of 20 black men shot dead nine women and three children early in a dawn raid on Sunday on a black rural settlement, police said. The attack took place at 4:30 a.m. (0230 GMT) near Richmond in the volatile Natal midlands region. The gunmen attacked seven homesteads in the settlement, police spokesman Henry Bhudram said.

Majali pledges legal action against violators of food and drug laws

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government will ask the general prosecutor to investigate charges raised by Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas that a good quantity of food and medicine that reaches the market is unfit for consumption, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali said Sunday.

Dr. Majali said the government would provide the general prosecutor with all information it has on the case and ask him to collect other relevant information from the public and the Lower House of Parliament.

Instructions will be issued to all government departments to "put all official documents they have at the disposal of the general prosecutor," Dr. Majali told the House at the end of a three-day session held to discuss Dr. Malhas' charges that appeared in a weekly tabloid over two weeks ago.

Dr. Majali said people suspected of violating regulations related to food and medicine standards would be referred to court.

House Speaker Taher Al Masri asked the Public Free-

doms and General Health committees to provide the House with a report on the results of investigations that they have launched into the issue in two weeks.

The executive authority has the prime responsibility in initiating reform and taking immediate and decisive measures (on the food and medicine situation). The responsibilities of the (House) are no less important and the House has to shoulder them through following up and monitoring the measures the government will take and putting them in the right direction," Mr. Masri said at the end of the session in which 37 deputies spoke on Dr. Malhas' charges.

"If it becomes necessary, the House will take all measures that the Constitution and laws make available to it (to ensure this)," Mr. Masri said.

Mr. Masri said the public's response to Dr. Malhas' charges show their thirst for reform in all government agencies, and asserted that the House would continue to check the government's actions "in all fields."

Twenty-seven out of the 37 deputies who spoke on the issue supported Dr. Malhas.

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Arafat-Peres meeting uncertain

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAEL AND the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) warily weighed on Sunday whether to embark on another round of talks this week in Cairo between Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Just a week after both men walked hand-in-hand in Davos, Switzerland, the PLO said a Cairo meeting was off unless Mr. Peres was authorised to reach a final accord on security issues that have delayed a troop pullout from Gaza and Jericho.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had said last week an accord was still weeks away but told his cabinet on Sunday that he hoped the Peres-Arafat talks would go forward.

"I am interested that this meeting take place," a senior official quoted Mr. Rabin as telling the cabinet.

However, Mr. Rabin was also quoted as saying the PLO always takes and we are always giving." He gave no public indication that Mr. Peres would be allowed to meet him.

In Tunis, a senior PLO official said a final decision on whether Mr. Arafat would meet Mr. Peres in Cairo on Monday was to be made by the PLO Executive Committee on

Sunday night.

The official, Yasser Abed-Rabbo, said Mr. Arafat would only go if the PLO had indications the Cairo meeting would reach a final agreement on security arrangements to implement the Sept. 13 deal on Palestinian self-rule.

Said Kamal, the PLO representative to Cairo, said Mr. Arafat would meet Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Tuesday to review the outcome of Mr. Peres' talks with a Palestinian delegation.

Mr. Arafat is expected in Cairo on Tuesday to meet Mr. Mubarak "as well as to follow the (Israeli-Palestinian) negotiations or the meeting to take place on Monday night," said Mr. Kamal.

The negotiations will focus on the list of points drawn up in Davos when Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat met on Jan. 29-30. Mr. Kamal told reporters after talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa.

Both sides emerged optimistic from the Davos encounter. But while Mr. Arafat said he

(Continued on page 5)

Ekeus wants more Iraqi steps

KUWAIT (Agencies) —

Senior United Nations envoy Rolf Ekeus said Sunday he was not satisfied Iran had given him enough information on its dismantling of chemical weapons, the official Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) reported.

"In the chemical area we are not satisfied that Iraq has given us the full detailed information necessary for us to be definite that all these weapons have been taken away," the agency quoted him as saying on arrival since Baghdad.

"We are continuing a dialogue to put a system in place which could prevent Iraq from acquiring these weapons, but there is still much to do."

Mr. Ekeus, who held five days of intensive talks in the Iraqi capital, heads the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) disarming Iraq under terms that ended the 1991 Gulf War over Kuwait.

He was due to hold talks with Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah shortly after arrival and would later on Sunday meet Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah. He is due to leave on Monday.

is important for us to listen to the Kuwaiti assessment," he was quoted as saying.

Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry Under-Secretary Suleiman Al Sabaeen told the news agency that during the envoy's visit Kuwaiti officials would be briefed on what had been achieved during the U.N. programme to monitor the dismantling of Iraqi weaponry.

In Baghdad, Iraqi Foreign Ministry Under-Secretary Riyad Al Qaisi reiterated his country's position that it had done all that is required to have the oil embargo, in place since Baghdad invaded Kuwait in 1990, lifted.

Mr. Ekeus said before leaving Baghdad political issues needed to be tackled before the ban on oil exports was lifted.

Both declined to identify areas of difference and points of agreement.

In Kuwait, Mr. Ekeus said he had come to listen to Kuwaiti views on the regional situation.

"The visit is very important because Kuwait is a major player at the U.N. on these questions and exerts very important influence. Therefore it

(Continued on page 5)

King returns home after condoling Assad and discussing peace process

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday paid a visit to Syria to offer condolences to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad over the death of son Basel Al Assad last month.

King Hussein and President Assad also exchanged views on regional and international issues, including the latest developments in the Middle East, in addition to bilateral relations. The two leaders stressed the need for continuous consultation and coordination between both countries.

King Hussein was also expected to brief Mr. Assad on the outcome of his talks in Washington last month with President Bill Clinton. Mr. Assad also met Mr. Clinton in Geneva earlier and both leaders have been in contact by telephone since then.

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein.

On the Syrian side, the meeting was attended by Syrian vice-president Abdul Halim Khaddam and Zuheir

His Majesty King Hussein with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in Damascus on Sunday (AFP)

dam and Mr. Mashqara, Mr. Zoubi, Mr. Sharra and senior Syrian officials.

The King and the accompanying delegation were seen off and received upon departure and arrival by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the speakers of the Upper and Lower House of Parliament and senior military and civil officials.

Hammad: 2 suspects confess to blasts, linked to Afghan returnees

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Interior Minister Salameh Hammad on Sunday announced that two people had confessed to planting the explosive devices that went off in two cinema theatres and said there was a broader plot to destabilise Jordan through subversion.

The minister's comments, carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, indicated that the two suspects could be linked to an underground group called "Jeish Mohammad" (Mohammad's Army) comprising mostly of Jordanians who returned home after fighting the 1980-90 Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Mr. Hammad said the two, Mohammad Ali Shehadeh, 26, a construction material

salesman, and Eid Saleh Jahaleen, 31, a plumber, had admitted to planting the explosive devices at Amman's Rivoli theatre on Jan. 26 and Zarqa's Salwa theatre on Feb. 1.

The two blasts injured at least seven people, including Mr. Jahaleen who suffered serious wounds to the lower part of his body at the Zarqa explosion.

The nature of Mr. Jahaleen's injuries were such as they could have been sustained only from a position of close proximity, possibly while handling the explosive device which went off prematurely, sources said. As such, they said, he was an immediate suspect after his removal to hospital and details provided upon interrogation led to other arrests.

First reports spoke of five

people arrested last Wednesday, one day after the Zarqa blast. More detentions were reported shortly thereafter.

Mr. Shehadeh and Mr. Jahaleen also admitted to having been behind another bomb which was safely removed at Akroush Supermarket at Safoud, northwest of Amman, last year.

"The criminals have confessed that they carried out these attacks," Mr. Hammad said, paying tribute to the "strenuous and relentless efforts of the Public Security Department" for the arrest of the suspects.

The two bombings at the two theatres known for screening X-rated movies, coupled with the discovery of the device planted at the Safoud Supermarket which sells alcohol, had immediately made religious extremists

tails and plots aimed at harming national security and stability," he added.

The two bombings at the two theatres known for screening X-rated movies, coupled with the discovery of the device planted at the Safoud Supermarket which sells alcohol, had immediately made religious extremists

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Yemeni pact to be signed in Jordan

SANA'A (Agencies) — A committee formed by Yemen's feuding political parties to pave the way for a peace accord said on Sunday that they would sign the accord in Jordan.

Sana'a radio said the date for the signing in Amman will be fixed within a week after the committee completes its work. The committee set Thursday as a deadline to remove remaining obstacles.

Differences between President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his deputy, Ali Salem Al Beedh, have delayed the signing of the accord worked out by the committee about three weeks ago.

Mr. Saleh's General Peoples Congress (GPC) and the Beedh's Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) ruled North and South Yemen respectively until they merged in May 1990 creating a unified Yemen.

In a joint statement, Mr. Ekeus and Mr. Aziz said both sides "expressed their readiness to expedite the process of establishing ongoing monitoring and verification in a spirit of goodwill."

They said their aim was to enable the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to report to the U.N. Security Council "that, in their view, Iraq had taken all the actions called for by paragraph 22 of Resolution 687."

The peace accord provides for political, economic, military and administrative reforms aimed at ending the country's political crisis threatening to tear it apart. The YSP and GPC have been at odds since last July.

Disagreements over the

venue, the non-Yemeni groups to be invited to witness the ceremony, security measures to protect their leaders and the steps to follow the signing of the accord were delaying it, political sources said.

The radio did not say which of these problems were solved.

Plane seized

Yemeni authorities seized an Uganda-flagged Boeing 707 Sunday, because it allegedly was carrying an unlicensed cargo of light military gear destined for southern Yemen.

An official Interior Ministry announcement said the cargo included telecommunications equipment.

In a statement distributed by the official Yemen News Agency, SABA, the ministry said the flight started in London and transited through Athens on its way to Aden.

"The military equipment was destined for Aden without the knowledge and approval of the authorities," said the announcement. "Investigations are underway to determine who is behind this incident."

An official at Aden airport said the Sana'a aviation authorities had been notified of the charter flight on behalf of Yemda, South Yemen's airline.

(Continued on page 5)

Dr. Nidal Hammad, F.A.C.C.
Dr. Nidal Hammad, F.A.C.C.
American Board of Internal Medicine
American Board of Cardiology
Former cardiologist at Texas Heart Institute in Houston

Announces the opening of his cardiology clinic in Amman
5th Circle, near Arab Centre for Heart and Surgery
Phone 862202

Middle East News

Turkey, Iran and Syria oppose any breakup of Iraq

ISTANBUL (Agencies) — Foreign ministers from Turkey, Syria and Iran have stressed their opposition to any breakup of Iraq, fearing it could lead to the possible creation of an Kurdish state in the north.

In a joint statement issued after a meeting here Saturday, the ministers said they would "oppose any efforts aimed at dismantling Iraq, on whatever pretext."

Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin and his Syrian and Iranian counterparts Farouk Al Sharaa and Ali Akbar Velayati had gathered to examine the situation in the Kurdish zone in northern Iraq.

"The future of Iraq must be determined only by the free will of the whole population... declaration and activities by certain groups in several western countries aimed at encouraging separation are not acceptable and must end," the statement said.

The three ministers also called on Iraq to conform to United Nations resolutions on disarmament, thereby enabling it to "assume its role in the international community again."

They urged Iraq to lift all restrictions and measures in force against "citizens in the north of the country."

The Kurds, who have controlled northern Iraq since the end of the Gulf war in February 1991, have proclaimed a federated state in the area.

But Turkish, Syria and Iran, with significant numbers of Kurdish citizens on their own territories, fear the creation of an independent Kurdish state in Iraq.

Mr. Velayati said in a joint press conference following the meeting that all three countries had "a fundamental interest in the situation in northern Iraq," adding that developments there would have "an impact on national security for all three countries."

It is the fourth meeting on the issue since November 1992 and came amid concern that a de facto independent state was

emerging in a Western-monitored zone set aside for Iraqi Kurds to avoid attacks from Baghdad.

Mr. Cetin also called on Baghdad to lift an embargo on electricity supplies in the north.

River accord elusive

Turkey rejected Syrian efforts for a water-use pact along two vital Middle East rivers.

Syria said a formal agreement on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers was needed to avoid escalating the dispute.

Mr. Sharaa did not mention what action his country could take to urge Turkey to sign a pact. But Turkey looks to Syria to help its fight against Kurdish rebels.

Speaking at a joint news conference after the meeting, Mr. Sharaa described the two rivers as "international waters" whose flow should be subject to a three-way pact with Turkey, Syria and Iraq.

The rivers originate in Turkey and join before emptying into the Gulf. The Euphrates passes through Syria and Iraq, and the Tigris runs through Iraq and forms part of Syria's border with Turkey and Iran.

Syria is concerned Turkey may siphon off too much water, restrict the flow or cut it all together.

For Turkey, however, settling the water issue is less urgent than trying to clamp down on separatist guerrillas of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK).

The group has been waging a war since 1984 for self-rule in southeastern Turkey. More than 10,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

Turkey has called on Syria to remove guerrilla camps on its side of the border. Other camps are based in Iraq.

"We condemn every kind of terrorism," said Mr. Sharaa.

He also said distinction should be made between "terrorism" and the "legitimate fight" of the Palestinians against Israeli rule.

Khartoum gunmen shot dead

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Security forces shot dead two gunmen accused in the killing of 13 worshippers at a mosque, and on Sunday the government displayed explosives, automatic rifles and pistols found with the alleged attackers.

Interior Minister Abdul Rahman Mohammad Hussein said the motivation for the slayings Friday remained unknown and denied reports that the attackers were from a religious extremist organisation.

"So far, we could not make any link between this group and any country or intelligence organisation," Brigadier Hussein said at a news conference. "We cannot accuse anyone."

Friday's shooting was the worst attack in the Khartoum area. Shortly after noon

prayers, gunmen opened fire on worshippers at the main mosque of the Ansar Sunna sect in Omdurman, across the Nile from Khartoum. Two children were among the 12 dead. Seventeen others were injured, one of whom died later.

Earlier the gunmen attacked a police station and killed two officers to steal weapons and a getaway car.

Brig. Hussein said three gunmen took part in the shooting, not the five reported at first. He said troops killed two of the attackers and wounded the third in a battle Saturday.

The slain men were from West Africa and the wounded one was from North Africa, Brig. Hussein said, without elaborating. He said a Yemeni national also was arrested for

possible indirect involvement in the killings.

The London-based Al Hayat daily Sunday reported that members of the Ansar Sunna sect accused a rival religious organisation called "Al Takfir wa Al Hijra" of being behind the killings.

But Brig. Hussein said there is nothing to link the killers with "Al Takfir wa Al Hijra."

The group, which first appeared in Egypt in 1977, has hardly been heard of since.

Brig. Hussein also rejected claims that the assailants were connected to the government.

Opposition figures suggested the government was behind the slaying because of the Ansar Sunna sect's stand against the regime. The sect is similar to the Wahabis of Saudi Arabia.

Cairo trial resumes today

CAIRO (AFP) — The trial of militants accused of trying to kill Egyptian Prime Minister Atef Sedki is scheduled to resume here on Monday despite the weekend murder of a key prosecution witness.

The trial opened briefly on Saturday hours after gunmen shot dead automobile dealer Sayed Ahmad Yehia, who sold a car to militants which they rigged with a bomb in a bid to kill Dr. Sedki near his northern Cairo home on Nov. 25.

The case in Cairo's high military court was adjourned until Monday, court sources said.

Mr. Yehia, who was to have given evidence on Saturday, was shot dead late Friday in his showroom at Shebeen Al Qanater, some 30 kilometres northeast of Cairo, along with a security guard, an employee and a customer, police said.

A policeman was also reported wounded.

After the bombing attack on Dr. Sedki who was killed a schoolgirl and injured 21 people, Interior Minister Hassan Al Afifi offered rewards to any person who could speed up the investigation and guaranteed them anonymity.

But days later press reports identified Sayed Ahmad Yehia as having received \$12,000 from General Afifi for providing information on individuals who bought the car used in the attack.

Mr. Yehia's brother and a third person were also rewarded, the press said.

Police later said the information led to the arrest of nine members of the underground Talah Al Fatah, (Vanguard of the Conquest). Six other defendants in the case are on the run and wanted by authorities.

The Talah Al Fatah is considered to be the armed wing of the Al Jihad movement, which claimed responsibility for the attack on the prime minister.

The nine defendants were silent Saturday as the chief judge, General Ahmad Abdul-Nabi, held proceedings and appeared unaware that gunmen had killed Mr. Yehia, Egyptian journalists said. The trial began on Jan. 22, even though six other accused have managed to evade arrest.

The group would have cheered if they had known about the killing, journalists added.

Court sources said that Mr. Yehia could have identified a number of the defendants.

But a lawyer specialising in trials of militants said on condition of anonymity that Mr. Yehia's murder will have no impact on the sentences imposed on the accused. The sentences were decided before the trial began."

Defendant Salah Al Sayed told the court Saturday he had been tortured while in detention and the court agreed to have a doctor check the claim.

Several policemen involved in the arrests gave testimony, Egyptian journalists said. Journalists for foreign news organisations were banned from the courtroom.

Friday's murder comes three days after another extremist group, the Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah, lost seven of its members in a gunbattle with police, which the militants denounced as a "massacre."

Western embassies urged their citizens to be on alert Thursday after the Gamaa warned foreign tourists and investors to stay out of Egypt.

Police have detained 90 suspects in the Yehia killing, security sources said on Sunday.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel jails 3 Palestinian for life

TEL AVIV (AP) — An Israeli court on Sunday sentenced to consecutive life sentences three Palestinians linked to Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction who were convicted of killing four Israelis. A court official said that the first defendant was sentenced to four life sentences, the second to three and the third to two life sentences. He did not elaborate. The three-man ring was convicted in the 1990 killings of two Israeli teenagers and an Israeli taxi driver, plus slaying an Israeli soldier in 1993. Israel Radio said that the three, relatives from the West Bank village of Katana and identified by the army as Abed Shamasneh, 30, Mohammad Shamasneh 24, and Ibrahim Shamasneh, 30, had confessed to the killings. During Sunday's hearing one of the accused asked to speak but was cut off by Judge Yaacov Bazak, who said he did not want to allow a political speech. "We are not the criminals you want to see," Israel Radio quoted the unidentified Palestinian as saying. "We are not child-killers. The children we killed were 17 and 18. And we are in the midst of a struggle with the government of Israel." An army statement announcing the capture of the three in November said they were affiliated with Fatah.

Iran to reinforce naval units in Gulf

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian security forces are to strengthen their naval units in the Gulf to halt trafficking in smuggled goods, a police commander said. Kiumars Ahu, quoted on Sunday by the official Iranian news agency IRNA, said the police had sent combat units to the southeastern province of Hormozgan, and would reinforce coastal stations in a bid to step up the fight against smuggling. He said 80 per cent of the smuggled goods entered through Hormozgan, the gateway for imports of contraband goods such as alcoholic drinks, video and satellite equipment and heavily-laxed luxury items from the United Arab Emirates. A large proportion of the drugs arriving from Pakistan also come in through Hormozgan.

Rights activist joins Tunisia contest

TUNIS (R) — Moncef Marzouki, outgoing president of Tunisia's League for Defence of Human Rights, announced on Sunday his candidacy for presidential elections scheduled for March 20. President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali had been the only known candidate to date and is expected to announce officially this week his intention to seek another five-year term. Several legal opposition groups support him. Mr. Marzouki has little chance of having his candidacy accepted as the electoral code stipulates candidates must have the support of at least 30 parliamentarians or leaders of municipal councils. The 141 seats in parliament and all municipal councils bar one are held by the ruling party led by Mr. Ben Ali.

Iran sends forces to track down drug bandits

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has sent police reinforcements to track down drug traffickers who shot dead four people in a highway robbery and later kidnapped three soldiers in the country's southeast, a police commander said Saturday. The commander, quoted by the official Iranian news agency IRNA, said the extra police units were dispatched to Sistan-Baluchestan province on Friday and have helped secure roads previously under the control of the traffickers. The bandits had in the past few weeks blocked roads from Khach to Zahedan, the province's capital, and from Zabol to Zahedan to rob travellers, the commander said. The bandits blocked the Zahedan-Zabol road on Thursday, killed four passengers on the bus and robbed the other and then abducted three soldiers while returning to Zahedan, IRNA said. The fate of the soldiers was not given. Authorities arrested two armed men who belong to a clan involved in trafficking drugs to Europe, it said.

Qatar foreign minister in Cuba

HAVANA (R) — Qatar Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Ben Jabr Al Thani arrived in Cuba Saturday for talks on potential economic collaboration with the communist-ruled island, a Cuban foreign ministry spokesman said.

The two sides are due to meet on Monday to discuss ways to help the Cuban economy.

Kuwait tightens rules on charities

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait, a generous source of funds for Islamic and social welfare charities, will tighten rules governing their operations to prevent abuse and ensure its knows where the money goes, newspapers reported on Sunday. Minister of Social Affairs and Labour Jassim Al Ouaib said he would issue new regulations in the next few days regulating methods of collection to protect charities from "intruders" who could take advantage of their work, the newspapers said. He said the rules would come into force before the start of around Feb. II of the Holy Month of Ramadan, a traditional time of alms-giving.

U.S. welcomes Cyprus deal on measures

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States Saturday welcomed an agreement between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot leaders to reopen Nicosia airport as part of U.N.-proposed confidence-building measures aimed at uniting the island. "We believe this is an important step towards achieving a just and permanent solution to the Cyprus problem," White House spokeswoman Dee Dee Meyers said in a statement. Robert Lamb, the State Department coordinator on Cyprus, told reporters in Cyprus Friday that both sides had accepted the measures "openly and freely," although "the level of trust between the two sides is low."

Egypt sunny and warm but cold on tourists

By Samia Nakhoul

Reuter

CAIRO — It is sunny and warm in Egypt this winter but the season has been one of the coldest for the country's tourist industry.

A breeze ruffles the sails of red and white feluccas on the Nile but the boats stand idle. The river, once buzzing with cruisers, is empty and the boatmen sit on the banks awaiting tourists who never come.

The outlook is bleak. Muslim militants, in a new attempt to damage the economy, have told foreign tourists and investors to leave the country for their own safety.

The Gamaa Al Islamiya (Islamic Group), the largest fundamentalist movement trying to overthrow the government of President Hosni Mubarak, gave the warning in response to a raid in which police shot dead seven militants.

"We implore tourists and investors to leave the country because the next operations will be extremely ferocious and strong," it said in a state-

ment.

Bored taxi drivers, staking hotels, jump at the sight of any client. Waiters miss the fat tips of the good old days and hoteliers speak nostalgically of past prosperous years.

"Look, the weather is nice and beautiful. It is sunny and warm but there are no tourists. Before the terrorist attacks, tourism was good. There was work and the country was booming. Now we're on the road to ruin," said Al Dagwa, a boatman.

"After a while we will go begging on the streets. May God destroy the terrorists. They have blackened and destroyed our lives," he added.

Militants who began attacking foreign tourists 16 months ago have hit not only hotels and travel agents but also small businesses and suppliers that relied heavily on tourism.

Three foreigners have been killed and dozens wounded in the political violence.

Talaat Mhammed Yousef, whose company pro-

vides most hotels with plastic cups and laundry bags, said his had gone down 40 per cent since the attacks began.

If the occupancy at hotels is high they put requests for losts of things. If their business is low, the orders are low and so the sales and profit is killed," he said.

"Every time I hear there is an attack, I feel a knife is cutting through my chest. Every attack means additional losses. We're making no profit and we barely cover our expenses," he said.

Police boats cruise the Nile River for 24 hours a day keeping an eye on the few tourists in the feluccas.

"We read in the newspapers that Germany would be sending a tourist group. But we have seen no Germans or anybody else," said boatman Hassan Al Dagwa.

In the first 10 months of 1993, Egypt's receipts from tourism fell by \$900 million or 42 per cent, compared with the same period of 1993, the ministry said.

The number of visitors fell 22 per cent over the same period but they tended to stay less time and spend less money than in the past, it added. The latest attack was

on a tourist bus in December in which eight Austrian tourists were wounded.

"Every attack is a blow to us. We feel more strangled and suffocated. Every time we say the country is back on track and is booming again, every time we hear of an attack we know we're getting poorer," said taxi driver Sayed Al Shirkawi.

"Whenever a bus comes and tourists get off, we always keep our eyes skinned, looking at people walking in case there's any militant who might attack. We feel like security guards looking after them," said boatman Dagwa.

On the boat, we always keep our eyes on the foreigners. We are always worried about them. When they get back on their bus, we sigh with relief."

Hotels said the occupancy rate at their five-star hotels was between 30 and 40 per cent less than last year despite a 15 per cent cut in prices for package tours and businessmen.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 2:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday

Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKEET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

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Veteran Japanese envoy says Tokyo seeks bigger Mideast role

By Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Japan agrees to reschedule \$14m in Jordanian debts

AMMAN — Japan seeks to create a Middle East atmosphere conducive to encouraging Arab-Israeli peace talks while leaving it to the parties themselves to reach agreements without outside interference, a veteran Japanese diplomat said Sunday.

Hiashi Owada, advisor to the foreign ministry of Japan, said: "Tokyo indeed seeks a higher-profile political role in the Middle East in the wake of changes brought about by the end to the cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union, but it does not want to involve itself in the direct Arab-Israeli negotiations launched in Madrid more than two years ago."

"What we seek is a new stable global order and a political role for Japan unlike the previous economic role that Japan used to play," Dr. Owada said in an interview.

The Japanese involvement efforts to find a political solution in strife-torn Cambodia is the forerunner of an increased role for Tokyo in regional affairs, said Dr. Owada, father of Princess Masako, wife of Crown Prince Naruhito.

In the Middle East, Japan is committed to creating a suitable environment for the parties to conduct bilateral talks and also help through the bilateral phase of the peace process, he added, noting that Tokyo chairs a multilateral working group on the environment and is the deputy head of working groups on water and regional economic cooperation.

Dr. Owada, who ranks among the senior-most Japanese diplomats, is on his ninth visit to Jordan as part of a regional tour which has already taken him to Egypt and Israel.

The previous visits came shortly before the Gulf crisis triggered by the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and during the height of the war itself which ended the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

During his current visit, Dr. Owada said, he found a sincere desire among all parties he met so far to seek a just and comprehensive peace settlement.

Japan is highly hopeful that the peace process would lead to a "durable settlement based on justice," he said.

Noting that some phases of the negotiations were making little progress, he added: "One cannot be unconditionally optimistic," but the elements are there holding out promises of peace.

"Human contacts through cross-border tourism," is one of the means to encourage the parties involved in the peace talks, and Japan is proposing joint ventures in tourism.

At the same time it is too early to discuss specifics since the private sector will have to be convinced of regional security and stability, he said.

Dr. Owada also noted that Japan was actively engaged in trying to set up a pollution control centre for the Red Sea to be shared by all riparians, including Jordan, Egypt, Israel, and possibly Saudi Ara-

bia.

Japan also believes that Arab countries should reconsider their economic boycott of Israel, but is not trying to pressure anyone.

"We have the position that the Arab boycott of Israel should be eliminated and trade and economic relations should be based on economic considerations," he said. "The Arab countries have to draw, their own conclusions from that."

In a bilateral context, he said Japan recognises the environmental problems Jordan faced and stood ready to help the Kingdom. He did not elaborate.

He noted that the "very close cordial relations" between the royal families of Japan and Jordan are an asset to continue to build strong ties between the two governments.

Noting that His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and other members of the Royal Family have visited Japan several times, Dr. Owada also expressed hope that members of the Japanese imperial family would visit Jordan soon "not in the too distant future," but that the issue was to be discussed between the two governments.

They said farmers are threatened with legal procedures because they are unable to honour their debts.

Farmers protest in front of Parliament

Many opportunities exist for Jordan and India — Azad

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN (Petra) — Several Jordan Valley farmers Sunday staged a sit-in in front of the Parliament building in Amman to protest what they said are their deteriorating conditions resulting from arbitrary agricultural policies and hasty decisions.

Gulam Nabi Azad, the minister, expressed satisfaction with the visit, saying it was highly positive and fruitful in advancing his country's quest to promote itself as a tourism destination.

Beyond that, Mr. Azad said his talks here also went a long way in conveying to Jordan the economic progress India made in the wake of a liberalisation process the government of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao launched two and a half years ago.

"Our foreign exchange earnings have gone up from \$1 billion to \$10 billion, inflation has been reduced to eight per cent from 17 per cent and exports have gone up by 22 per cent after the liberalisation process took off," he said.

"Part of the process involves opening new avenues for economic cooperation with friendly countries," the minister said.

"There are many opportunities that Jordan and India could benefit from each other, and we hope some of these openings would be exploited," Mr. Azad told the Jordan Times.

On the political side of bilateral relations, the minister said he had conveyed his country's appreciation of the efforts launched by His Majesty King Hussein to end the 1991 Gulf crisis peacefully as well as the King's consistent pursuit of a negotiated settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Noting that peaceful coexistence was the key element in such an approach, Mr. Azad said India's approach to resolving



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Sunday receives visiting Indian Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation Gulam Nabi Azad. Also

attending the meeting was Minister of Tourism Mohammad Adwan (left) (Petra photo)

in the world," he said. "That is the best evidence of the quality of training we offer."

Mr. Azad said Mr. Adwan accepted an invitation to visit India and might be making the trip in March.

Mr. Azad paid a courtesy call on Minister of Transport Adeb Halasa, who is convalescing at home.

Earlier, he had held talks with Ministry of Transport, Civil Aviation Authority and Royal Jordanian (RJ) officials on "some outstanding issues and RJ's interest to fly to other points in India" other than New Delhi and Calcutta.

RJ is known to be seeking landing rights in Bombay, India's commercial capital.

"In principle, we have no problems in allowing RJ to fly to Bombay, but the issue has to be discussed at various levels before a definite commitment could be made leading to a firm agreement," Mr. Azad said.

JEDCO plans 2 industrial fairs

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO) plans to organise a Jordanian industrial fair in Beirut and another in Yemen, according to Mohammad Bani Hani, JEDCO director general.

At the Beirut fair, some products on display will be for sale to the public, but in Yemen, products will be sold later on a contract basis, tu

bani Hani said.

He said JEDCO will organise Jordanian participation in other international fairs including Cairo in April, Osaka, Japan in May, Berlin in June, Damascus in August and Moscow in September.

Mr. Bani Hani said businesses wishing to take part in these fairs should send samples of their products to JEDCO.

JEDCO is also considering organising fairs in Central Asia and Africa, he said.

According to statistics of the Federation of Jordanian

Increased imports of phosphate 'possible' — Australian minister

Chambers of Commerce, (FJCC), Jordan imported around JD 28 million worth of commodities from Western Australia in 1993, mainly meats, live sheep and some chemicals, including aluminium hydroxide, but exported to Australia only JD 4 million worth of products, the most important of which was phosphate.

FJCC President Muhammad Asfour told the Jordan Times that besides the trade imbalance one area of importance which needed to be looked into was the present difficulties involved in importing meat from Australia. "We are importing lots of meat from them and the distance between Australia and Jordan is quite big. This implies lots of difficulties: firstly, it raises the selling price of the Australian meat and limits the amounts of fresh meat we get from there.

Mr. Cowan, who arrived in Jordan Sunday for a two-day visit, will meet with the Minister of Industry and Trade, the Minister of Supply, and several Jordanian businesspeople.

According to statistics of the Federation of Jordanian

Most of it must be frozen," explained Mr. Asfour.

In order to lessen the current imbalance of trade between the two countries, Mr. Asfour suggested that "firstly, we must create a system of preference for our products adjusted to the limits of the trade balance, to allow our exports to go to Australia with as limited duties as possible."

"Secondly, Australia should allow us to exhibit our industrial products in Australia in centralised exhibition areas."

Mr. Asfour said that during last year's visit to Jordan of Western Australia's minister of primary industries and fisheries, of which the present trip is a follow-up and continuation of talks, "we talked about bringing Australian meat here to Jordan for processing and about possible

joint ventures in producing certain chemicals, and we discussed cooperation in textiles, since Australia has an extensive wool industry."

Mr. Cowan told the Jordan Times that for his part, he was "interested in bringing some of the technical skills which Western Australia has to Jordan, specifically in meat processing."

When asked about Australia's attitude towards the Jordanian minister of health's allegations that foreign countries exporting food to Jordan were foisting off their "garbage" on Jordan's citizens, Mr. Cowan said that until now, he had not been informed of the matter.

"But we'd certainly be ready and willing to respond to any and all inquiries. We take every precaution to make sure that our products are safe and acceptable," Mr. Cowan said.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Art exhibition by Iraqi artists at Ab'dad Art Gallery — Mecca Street.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Huda Sami Qassem at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art and photo exhibition by several Arab artists at the Balqa Art Gallery (Tel. 728902).
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Mohammad Al Windawi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by artists Akram Isawi and Jamal Eddawwi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by artist Shaker Abu Ghazaleh at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.
- ★ Exhibition by Lebanese artist Hussein Madi at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "perm...ent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists. (Tel. 643271/2)
- ★ Art exhibition by several Iraqi and Jordanian artists at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).
- ★ Art exhibition by Suha Noursi entitled "Landscapes" at the Hotel Jordan Inter-Continental Gallery (8:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.).

FILMS

- ★ Short film in French entitled "Pepin Geant" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
- ★ Film in French entitled "Amadeus" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

SATELLITE DIALOGUE

- ★ A one-hour Worldnet dialogue via satellite on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: Life, Times and Legacy at the U.S. Embassy at 2:30 p.m.

Flower growers consider exports

AMMAN (Petra) — Flower producers are now growing sufficient stocks for the local markets and are considering plans to export their decorative blossoms, according to Hassan Khorma president of the Jordanian Flower Producers Cooperative Society.

He said the export of Jordanian flowers to foreign markets would yield in significant revenues for the national economy.

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Opinion & Analysis

Jordan Times

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Life at stake

AT A time when the shocking disclosures of the Minister of Health, Dr. Abdul Rahim Malhas, are still reverberating amid new revelations about the extent of the food and medicine debacle, the government saw fit to adopt four new sets of regulations on food safety and drug testing in an apparent bid to defuse the crisis. Such a response from the Cabinet is not exactly what the public has been seeking in view of the severity of the charges about the quality of the foodstuff and medicines that citizens have been consuming. Without the need to take sides on the merits or demerits of the case against the current and past administrations on this issue, the least that one would have expected from the government is a more serious and determined effort to get to the bottom of the food and drug affair.

Approving new legislations on the subject is not enough. True, existing laws were discovered as deficient or lax, but the crux of the problem lies elsewhere. No matter how perfect the laws and regulations are on such matters, in the final analysis what is important is how these legal guidelines are enforced.

The main bone of contention of Dr. Malhas is not just the lack of adequate laws but the deliberate bypassing of applicable laws for criminal purposes. In retrospect, we cannot understand why some deputies in Parliament were all hot and bothered over the decision of the minister to go public with his accusations. What is wrong with the public knowing the truth about what is happening to them in their own country? Second, need some deputies be reminded that they were elected to look out for the interests of their electorates? And third, hasn't the government repeatedly said that it seeks candid criticism and comments from civil servants in order to better serve the public? We therefore see considerable merit in the call by some parliamentarians that a public or special prosecutor be named to look into the case. This has been the ways of all operational democracies in the world and since Jordan has decided to join the club we must be prepared to learn from the experiences of others.

Against this backdrop, it is unfortunate that the government was not the one to take the initiative in calling for a judicial probe into the mess. Legislating new regulations does not address past omissions or commissions, especially the kind that borders on criminal negligence or worse, criminal intent. But any such judicial investigation and, if need be, prosecution must broaden its horizon to reach all other related threats to life in the country. By way of example, we have the indiscriminate use of pesticides and insecticides, the quality of the water we drink and charges made by the foreign press that a shipment of blood contaminated with HIV was sent to Jordan and other Middle Eastern countries last year.

It is in the interest of all sides to get to the bottom of this tempest. Brushing it aside, burying it with half-baked solutions or coating it with more regulations will not do. The issue at stake here is life itself.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON the endless sanctions imposed by the United Nations on the Iraqi people, Al Ra'i daily said that people in Europe and the United States watch almost daily reports about U.N. inspection teams going to Iraq and the death of thousands of Iraqis as a result of the sanctions, with no one asking questions about the loss of innocent lives. Every time there is a chance for the U.N. Sanctions Committee to decide on whether to lift the sanctions or not, false reports appear in the western media, justifying the extension of sanctions and subjecting the Iraqis to further suffering, said the daily. The tragic death of a Christian clergy in Iran which we also condemn, has attracted the attention of the western nations which promptly condemned the act, but the death of thousands of Muslims in Palestine, Iraq and Bosnia has failed to draw western nations' pity, said the daily. After imposing the sanctions for more than three and a half years, no one believes that the embargo is meant to punish the Iraqi leader and his regime, but feels that it is designed to murder thousands of Iraqi children and the sick and the old, said the paper. This mass murder of the innocent people of the Arab and Islamic World, it said, is being systematically conducted by the western nations which, the paper said, are bent on liquidating the Islamic Nation.

DISCUSSING THE controversy over the food and drug situation in light of the ongoing parliamentary debate, a columnist in Al Dustour daily called the readers' attention to a report submitted to the government by the Audit Bureau. This report, which provides proof of serious excesses concerning health and supply matters in the country, reveals the extent of damage to the public interest and should be released to the public immediately, said Taher Al Udwan. The writer said that the report was as serious as the health minister's statements about the malpractices related to food and drugs in the Kingdom and hence it is of concern to the public which ought to know the facts. The Audit Bureau is a watchdog over government departments' performance and being so, it must be strengthened and its reports should be made public so as to thwart further manipulations and corruption in government circles, stressed the writer. He urged the Lower House of Parliament to see to it that the Audit Bureau reports be published as "facts divulged."

Managing the health policy in Jordan

By Izzat R. Daqani

JORDAN HAS witnessed over the last two decades an impressive expansion in its health infrastructure in terms of facilities and services. The private sector has surpassed, in technology and sophistication, many of the services provided by the government. Yet, the massive public and private expenditures on health did not produce commensurate improvement in the health status of the population, particularly for the urban poor and rural dwellers.

Jordan is an intermediate between advanced industrial societies and developing but traditional ones. However, trends in diseases and methods for health management are moving more towards those of the industrialised societies. Such trends bear the characteristic of being very expensive and highly technical, which adds more burden on the Jordanian health system and its ability to deliver.

Furthermore, there has been an evolution of disease patterns with many similarities to industrialised countries. Such patterns are dominated by chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes and cardiac problems. The government in general and the Ministry of Health in particular, face a problem of how to expand services, maintain and operate public health services and improve their quality at all levels, particularly when faced with the many financial, technical and managerial constraints.

Managing a system of health is much more than the management of its facilities and support systems. It is planning, implementing, supervising and matching desired results with actual outcome — that is judging performance against objectives. It also involves decisions about priorities and resource allocation as far as the health needs of the population are concerned.

The changing health conditions in Jordan require an adaptation of institutional capacity. This primarily includes various aspects such as the roles of public and private health facilities, health education, health promotion and research capacity. It may also include actions related to health, which can involve various ministries, public institutions and different sectors cutting across the public — private interface. It is also important that such institutions be able to cope with aspects of inequities which incorporate measures for chronic diseases and cost containment. There are also the ever-added problems of dealing with the diseases of affluence and diseases of poverty. This leads to new and added demands on health whilst the old problems of inadequate basic services persist. Ironically, this is all exacerbated by the limited financial resources allocated to health in the fiscal budget. It may be useful to note that for the year 1994, only JD 81 million (\$115m) was allocated for the health budget. This averages about \$30 per capita annually for both capital and recurrent health costs. This figure becomes 'humble' when compared with the health expenditures in the more affluent and industrialised countries."

funding needs. It is important for the government to seek to balance the roles of both sectors so as to assure fiscal strength of public services with adequate access to health services by the population at large. Involving the private sector does not mean undermining the overall national goals and adversely affecting public sector integrity. There should not be a struggle between both sectors since a "mixed system" can work best for the country. Best example of this is a quasi-nationalisation of pharmaceutical services whereby the private sector assumes a much larger role in the procurement and dispensing of medicines to the public.

"For the year 1994, only JD 81 million (\$115m) was allocated for the health budget. This averages about \$30 per capita annually for both capital and recurrent health costs. This figure becomes 'humble' when compared with the health expenditures in the more affluent and industrialised countries."

The Ministry of Health must design its programmes in a manner which results in improvements of people's lives with equitably just solutions.

There is need to move away from preoccupation with disorders of the body to an awareness of the health hazards arising from environmental exposure to many toxic substances. Other important factors include the important and somehow dramatic changes in the social conditions which influence behaviour and life style. The "traditional" primary health care approach may need to be modified to address the different problems arising from changes in life styles and diets, particularly in urban settings.

Achieving an efficient health system while striving to improve social equity is

not a simple task, particularly in a restrained economy. There may be need for a system whereby the government coordinates policy and goals across different sectors at the national level while it integrates planning and implementation across sectors at the community level. This fits well with the aims of the current government in its strive for decentralisation and more active involvement by all concerned. Thailand, for example, implemented this very successfully since technical cooperation at the village (community) level reflected a commitment to initiatives, self-reliance and local institutional development. This approach usually

"bad" habits and behavioural modes advising them that there are excellent facilities to "fix them up" when things go wrong or their body needs attention. It is also far more important, as another example, to address the problem of over-exposure to the sun than treat the resulting cases of skin cancer which are very expensive and may result in diverting scarce public funds away from the more needed primary health care. The effects of health education are longer lasting and lead to general improvement of the health status of the population. There is great need for habit modification. In this context, people must be encouraged to quit smoking, reduce fat contents in their diet and exercise more. Other adverse modes include stress, obesity, malnutrition and many more.

It is important to note that the availability of medical care is not generally associated with improved health status. People do not get sick because they lack medical care! The idea that doctors can rescue us from death can lead to excessive risk taking. However, medical care remains to be very useful in the management of diseases. In this context, people seem to abuse the system due to misinformation or naive ignorance, by seeking medical solutions to social-oriented problems. In rural areas and among the urban poor, the general factors of poverty are usually associated with early pregnancy, even earlier marriage of the female and low levels of general education. Furthermore, minor ailments are often exaggerated leading to visiting doctors and hospitals — ironically the medical community seems to encourage this for obvious reasons!

Health is the capacity to adapt and evolve towards a system whereby complex units and problems come together to form a creative comprehensive setup. The

In post-breakup debris, nukes are just the start

By Flora Lewis

KIEV — One way or another, both President Leonid Kravchuk and local and foreign observers here are confident that Ukraine will carry out the agreement to get rid of its nuclear weapons that was signed with Presidents Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin in Moscow two weeks ago.

But it won't be easy. People here are convinced that Ukraine got a bad deal and that Washington was outplayed by Moscow in a negotiation they know little about, don't basically understand, and consider above all a demonstration of their weakness and helplessness in dealing with Russia.

"Clinton was made into just a messenger boy for the Russians," a Ukrainian journalist said.

In an interview, Mr. Kravchuk avoided saying clearly whether he will submit the agreement to the current, fractious, angry parliament, wait until a new one is elected in March, or just barge ahead on his own. He has the power to do that, and he does seem to understand as almost no one else here does how important dismantling the nuclear missiles is to Ukraine's difficult future and its relations with the United States and Europe.

He denies that there were any secret clauses, contradict-

ing what Mr. Clinton's entourage said in Moscow. That seems to be right. The secrets are not about security or economic commitments, but technical details about how the warheads are made and their plutonium content. Since Russia will retain the same kind of weapons, it obviously does not want those details revealed. That is understandable, and it is a shame that the White House has not made it clear, since the talk of "secret clauses" has created all kinds of suspicions.

It is a part of the whole messy issue, which was allowed to get far more complicated and feverish than was necessary through obsession with secrecy and lack of clear explanation. Mr. Kravchuk never consulted or informed his main rival, Ivan Plushch, chairman of the parliament and described as "by far the most powerful politician" in the country.

Some of the parallels with Russia are disturbing. The elections are not likely to resolve anything but are expected to produce an even more difficult, indecisive legislature. As of now, nobody sees an alternative to Mr. Kravchuk, but, like Mr. Yeltsin, he is waffling on reforms which have barely begun, while the country sinks in hyperinflation.



"We don't have a Zhirinovsky here," an editor told me. "Ukrainians are conservative, tolerant, patient," he claimed. But neither do they have much to do with the way of constructive, reform-minded democrats. The democrats tend to be the most ardent, populist nationalists — and "nationalities," which is primarily a reference to the 12 million ethnic Russians in the total population of 53 million, is a big issue.

Mr. Kravchuk said his talks with Mr. Clinton here and in

Moscow were almost entirely about economics. While he does not claim he got big promises, he has big expectations, and disappointment seems inevitable. The economy, which can deteriorate a lot more before there is a chance of turning it around, seriously aggravates all the other troubles, so the outlook is gloomy.

One major reason the Ukrainians are so reluctant to give up the nuclear missiles they don't control and can't

think of using is that they feel it is the only reason the West has paid any attention to them. When the weapons are gone, they feel they will be left to wallow in their plight with little choice but to "crawl back to Moscow," in Vladimir Zhirinovsky's words.

It is partly their own fault. There has not been much real change here. Mr. Kravchuk is a stolid, old-style apparatchik, cantankerous and crafty, although he has learned a good bit about dealing with westerners. And it

The U.S.-Saudi line is off the hook

By Jim Hoagland

WASHINGTON — Three years after the United States went to war to protect Saudi Arabia's underground oceans of oil, there is no U.S. ambassador in Riyadh and no prospect that one will soon be there.

The case of the missing envoy is a small signal of a dangerous drift in one of America's most important foreign relationships.

George Bush's top priority in unleashing Operation Desert Storm was to protect the Saudi royal family. Mr. Bush's energy policy, I noted at the time, consisted of King Fahd's telephone number. The king seems to have fallen off the White House Rolodex since Bill Clinton took over the switchboard.

Communication has grown sparse just as the kingdom approaches a crucial political moment in its slow but unsteady progress towards a more representative form of

government. There is no high-level Mr. or Ms. Saudi Arabia in this American administration to pay attention to or influence the changes that many Saudis believe are coming.

If anything, Saudi Arabia's energy importance to America should have increased since the 1991 war liberated Kuwait and drove the Iraqi Republican Guard back from the Saudi frontier. Last month foreign oil imports grew to 49 per cent of America's daily consumption of 17 million barrels of oil. One out of every 10 barrels of oil consumed in America now comes from Saudi Arabia, which sells 7 million barrels of oil abroad every day. The Saudis dominate the world market.

Saudi policymakers have told Arab colleagues that they have no clear idea what the Clinton team wants on oil pricing and production or how the rising trend of U.S. oil imports fits, or does not fit, into Mr. Clinton's energy policy.

Consider this analysis of one Saudi expert: Saudi Arabia today is taking in about \$20 billion in annual revenue from oil and is committed to spending \$45 billion, including \$6 billion on interest payments. King Fahd will not raise the minor taxes that Saudis pay, and is totally dependent on oil revenues. He reportedly checks oil prices three times a day.

A steady slide in prices has done nothing to improve the king's notoriously volatile humor. Due to visit the United States for medical exams early this year, he is increasingly isolated and uncommunicative, according to some accounts.

After long delays, the king has delivered on a promise to appoint a respected council of advisers, known as the Majlis. But he maintains absolute power under a constitution that, as one resident of Saudi Arabia says, "legitimises authoritarian rule."

It is a situation in which the

United States needs its equivalent of a Bandar in Riyadh (especially since Bandar is no longer Bandar in Washington). Someone who is well-connected politically, knowledgeable about the host country and both activists and subtle enough to tip events in a positive direction (such as enlarging democracy) when a word or a deed is sought from a foreign envoy.

Instead, the United States has been without an ambassador of any kind in Riyadh since August 1992. After initial indications that the post would go to a businessman friend of Bill proved wrong, Mr. Clinton accepted the State Department's career candidate, Edward W. Gnehm, Jr., who won favourable notice for his performance as ambassador to Kuwait during and after Desert Storm.

But Mr. Gnehm's nomination flies in the face of the Saudi royal family's distaste for envoys who have served in

smaller, less important Gulf countries. Moreover, his statements urging democracy on Kuwait were noticed by the king. The Saudis, I am told, are refusing to approve Mr. Gnehm's nomination. Instead they let it twist slowly in the desert wind.

This is a sign of deeper underlying complications in the Saudi-U.S. relationship that need urgent, high-level attention. If Mr. Clinton wants him as his envoy, he will need to invest Mr. Gnehm with his full authority and support, waging a campaign on his behalf throughout his tour. If the president is not prepared to do that, it will mean having to drop the Gnehm nomination, despite the ambassador's evident virtues and the embarrassment that it will cause at the State Department.

Time and events press in Saudi Arabia. It is no time to stand on diplomatic niceties — The Washington Post.

Majali pledges legal action

(Continued from page 1)

system in Jordan, possibly cure disease. The Ministry functions as a whole system, and appears as a single division for disease management before it has much concern so much fear, ministry of Health, bureaucracy which restricted by old regulations, legislation centralised and there is lack of entrepreneurship, innovation. What is long term movement of produces, according to Ministry of Health, with management in the wrong way, are dispirited the people are. It remains to be the services, that people, not what is signed to determine facts should be omitted, people must understand in order to be. If the Minister becomes a consolidator, innovative, regulations, place of operation, we're allocation, may have to be "obsolete" as a new approach, even newer attitudes.

Dr. Majali said some deputies were still addressing the government with slanderous language. But we will not respond to these accusations and will stick to (proper) norms of talking... out of our concern for consolidating democracy," which benefited from the debate that took place in the House over Dr. Malhas' allegations. Dr. Majali told the lawmakers. Dr. Majali said that cases of corruption and abuse of office in Jordan were an exception, saying that they do not exceed similar violations in any other country.

"Assure you that our food is safe and that our medicine is safe," said Dr. Majali.

But he said, the government would take more measures to ensure the safety of food and medicine and raise the standards governing the safety and quality of food and medicine.

He said the government would prepare draft laws to establish separate food and medicine directorates and to prevent monopolies in producing and marketing food and medicine.

There is a confidence gap between the citizens and officials and hence is the big noise that this issue has caused," said Deputy Mohammad Abu Oleim, voicing support for Dr. Malhas in the fight against corruption.

"I thanked God when I heard about the food and medicine that are unfit for consumption because most people in the Jordan Valley do not eat meat," said Deputy Jameel Al Hishoush in a reference to poverty in his constituency.

In response to the deputies' speeches on Sunday, Dr. Malhas reiterated these charges but said the Ministry of Health, with the support of the government, had started a process of reform that would plug all loopholes in legislations.

Suspects confess to blasts

(Continued from page 1)

The nature of the bombs, described as crude, home-made devices consisting of acetone peroxide, were the same as the type used by members of Jeish Mohammad in some attacks in 1991.

The bombing technique was believed to have been acquired by Jeish Mohammad members during their fight alongside the Afghan Mujahideen.

Most of the group's members are believed to be Jordanian volunteers who fought with the Afghan rebels and returned home after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1990.

Eighteen members of the group were found guilty in 1992 of carrying out or plotting attacks against senior government and security officials, state buildings and foreign diplomats as well as liquor stores and night clubs.

Eight of them, including two in absentia, were sent

tion and determination to fight what he described as "mafia" of drug and food merchants who sought fast profits at the expense of the people and their safety.

Some deputies lashed out at the Ministry of Supply for allegedly allowing the entry of shipments of sub-standard food into the market, with one lawmaker saying he would request a "general discussion" of the situation at the ministry in order to investigate alleged violations of the law.

In his speech to the House, Dr. Majali reaffirmed the government's commitment to protect the citizens in cooperation with the House. But he took a firm stand against deputies who questioned his cabinet's abilities and determination to fight corruption and bring about reform.

Responding to the severe criticism that deputies made of his cabinet, Dr. Majali said some deputies seized "the opportunity to shake the status of the government. But we say here in front of you (that) we hide nothing from you and have provided you with all (the information) you demanded... we have nothing to hide or to fear."

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Arafat-Pere

(Continued from page 1)

would be ready to sign a final deal in Cairo this week, Mr. Rabin said it needed three or four more weeks and the Israeli army raised its own reservations.

The security issues are the most important. But they are not the only ones," Mr. Rabin warned on Wednesday. "We will also have to agree on civilian and economic issues."

The key stumbling-blocks remain the control of border crossings with Egypt and Jordan into the new autonomous areas and measures for protecting Jewish settlements in Gaza.

It is no secret that every country concerned has been discussing

The right to know highlighted by Dr. Malhas' crusade

By Waleed Sadi

The immediate issue in the Malhas affair that surfaced after the Wednesday parliamentary debate on the state of the medicines and foodstuff in the country was whether the minister of health has gone wrong by not confining himself to the proper political and legal channels for correcting the wrongs that he said existed in the current legislation and practices. In other words, his opponents in the Lower House of Parliament who took the floor Wednesday, found fault with the minister for going public with the information about the condition of food and drugs instead of limiting his probe to and within official circles. This aspect of the debate is certainly a human rights issue that deserves scrutiny as well.

In strictly pragmatic terms, this concern needs to be put in proper perspective. The most viable way to go about it is to view it against the backdrop of precedents both within Jordan

Human Rights File

and outside it. The first thing that comes to mind is the endemic debate about the dangers of smoking in the U.S. which started acrimonious debates across the world. The first news broke out in the U.S. about the link between smoking and cancer or heart diseases, there was a deliberate campaign by cigarette companies to keep the public as little acquainted with the medical evidence about this link as possible.

The second, frontal attack by the cigarette manufacturers was to offer doctor medical evidence to dispute the findings of the scientific community incriminating cigarette smoking as a principle culprit in heart and cancer diseases. It was only recently, and after some four decades, that doctors who had worked for cigarette corporations and defended their cause have come forward and admitted having lied or doctored their medical information in order to suit the purposes of the manufacturers.

The same goes for nuclear contamination. History is replete with cases where establishments succeeded in hushing up

disasters resulting from nuclear energy. Blood contamination with HIV or hepatitis or food contaminated by pesticides or insecticides have likewise been treated with maximum secrecy. This is not to mention water poisoning and air pollution, also covered up for too long.

It is fair to say in conclusion that it is part and parcel of governments nature whether in the developed or developing countries, to do whatever possible to hide basic information about such threats to life in a bid to avoid panic and political fallout. Crisis containment by keeping the masses effectively out of the "healing process" has been state policy across the board and is simply the rule of the thumb everywhere in the world, including the most advanced countries, for obvious reasons.

"Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) stipulates that everyone has the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas provided this is done in a responsible way."

Throughout contemporary history only when the media succeeded in getting to the bottom of the stories about dangers to life were there real, determined efforts to reverse the tide and rectify dangers posed by contaminations, poisoning or pollution. The success of the press in exposing and dealing with such health problems leads in turn to the involvement of the public in the cleansing process. Hopefully, the process of dissemination of vital and correct information and the subsequent participation of the people are conducted in a responsible way. Otherwise, the process of public involvement through the press could become counter productive. There is nothing worse than hysteria in these matters. And when hysteria is deliberately touched off to undermine a certain country, then it is cause to find criminal responsibility. Yet,

constraints against criminal intents in such issues can be checked and frustrated by a variety of effective ways. The democratic countries in the world have indeed succeeded in protecting themselves against such abuses by laws and practices, but not by keeping the public in the dark for fear of panic.

This is where one could differ with all those who opposed Dr. Malhas for going public. Admittedly his method is still unorthodox in Jordan. However, the Kingdom has already enjoyed some meaningful precedents set by two prominent ministers. Laila Sharaf and Ibrahim Izzeddin have both gone public with their disagreements with their respective cabinets on issues that concerned the people. In retrospect, therefore, the dramatisation of the food and drug problem by Dr. Malhas is a lesser evil compared to the probable risk that would ensue should the problem remain within official circles alone.

Besides, the proper treatment of all such and similar issues requires the participation of the people. This is all the more true in a dynamic democracy such as the one that we all enjoy nowadays in Jordan. The right to know is a cardinal principle in all existing international human rights instruments. This right supersedes the desire to treat problems within governmental circles alone as suggested by some prominent members of Parliament. Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) stipulates that everyone has the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas provided this is done in a responsible way.

Dr. Malhas' assertions appear to be fundamentally correct and made in good faith. Therefore, there is a prime face case in support of his decision to go public. There is also every reason to believe that had the minister gone only official in dealing with stunning and shocking revelations about the food we eat and the medicines we administer, the threats to life in Jordan would have continued indefinitely. We all had a taste of how the government dealt with scandals affecting the people when the lid was put on publicity. No one wants a repetition of earlier performances, therefore the overwhelming support for Dr. Malhas' crusade.

Yemeni pact to be signed in Jordan

(Continued from page 1)

However, as it entered Yemeni airspace, the plane was intercepted and forced to land at Hodeida airport, where its cargo and crew were seized, to be said, insisting on anonymity.

He called the incident a "dangerous precedent" in a nation already suffering from rivalry between the north and south.

The official, a member of the YSP, did not specify what cargo aboard the plane, or say if it carried any passengers.

The Sanha statement did not specify whether the plane had been forced down or had made a regular stop in Hodeida, a Red Sea port of Yemen about 200 kilometres southwest of Sanaa.

On Thursday the YSP said it had seized anti-aircraft missiles being moved by its northern rivals towards the south.

A YSP spokesman said an army vehicle carrying 40 anti-aircraft missiles from the north and heading south was seized by a southern brigade.

Ekeus wants Iraq steps

(Continued from page 1)

The clause provides for the lifting of the international oil embargo against Iraq once Baghdad has honoured U.S. resolutions calling for the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Ekeus said he tried to emphasise in his talks with Iraqi leaders the "political ambience" surrounding the clause.

The joint statement issued by Mr. Ekeus and Mr. Aziz said the "intense phase" of U.N. inspections would continue, and Iraq had "indicated that it would welcome all such inspection teams and facilitate their tasks."

The two sides discussed technical matters in a "professional and business-like manner," the statement said, and their talks "yielded positive results."

They agreed to hold a further round of talks in the first half of March to maintain the momentum in the disarmament process.

Arafat-Pere

(Continued from page 1)

would be ready to sign a final deal in Cairo this week, Mr. Rabin said it needed three or four more weeks and the Israeli army raised its own reservations.

The security issues are the most important. But they are not the only ones," Mr. Rabin warned on Wednesday. "We will also have to agree on civilian and economic issues."

The key stumbling-blocks remain the control of border crossings with Egypt and Jordan into the new autonomous areas and measures for protecting Jewish settlements in Gaza.

A piercing new spotlight on the ravages of AIDS

By Caroline Richmond

IN A few weeks, European scientists will acquire the means to watch the molecular basis of life and to take serial photographs of chemical reactions as they occur. Using a massive particle accelerator, newly completed in Grenoble, France, they will be able to study the human immune system to help develop new treatments for AIDS.

The European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF), a particle accelerator the size of a sports stadium, produces intense light concentrated into an extremely fine beam, like a laser. It differs from a laser by coming in a broad range of wavelengths, including X-rays.

Its resolution will allow pictures to be taken at microsecond intervals; an enzyme can be photographed linking up a chemical reaction inside living cells in a glass dish. It will exert two million atmospheres of force, allowing high-pressure applications. This is impossible elsewhere, including at Britain's major particle accelerator at Daresbury, Cheshire, built in 1980. At Grenoble, synchrotron light is emitted by high-energy electrons which follow a curved trajectory. Initially produced in a linear accelerator (a linac) and then in a circular accelerator (a synchrotron), they have an energy of 6 billion electron-volts. They are injected into a storage ring, 840 metres in circumference, where they circulate for hours at constant energy, guided by bending magnets.

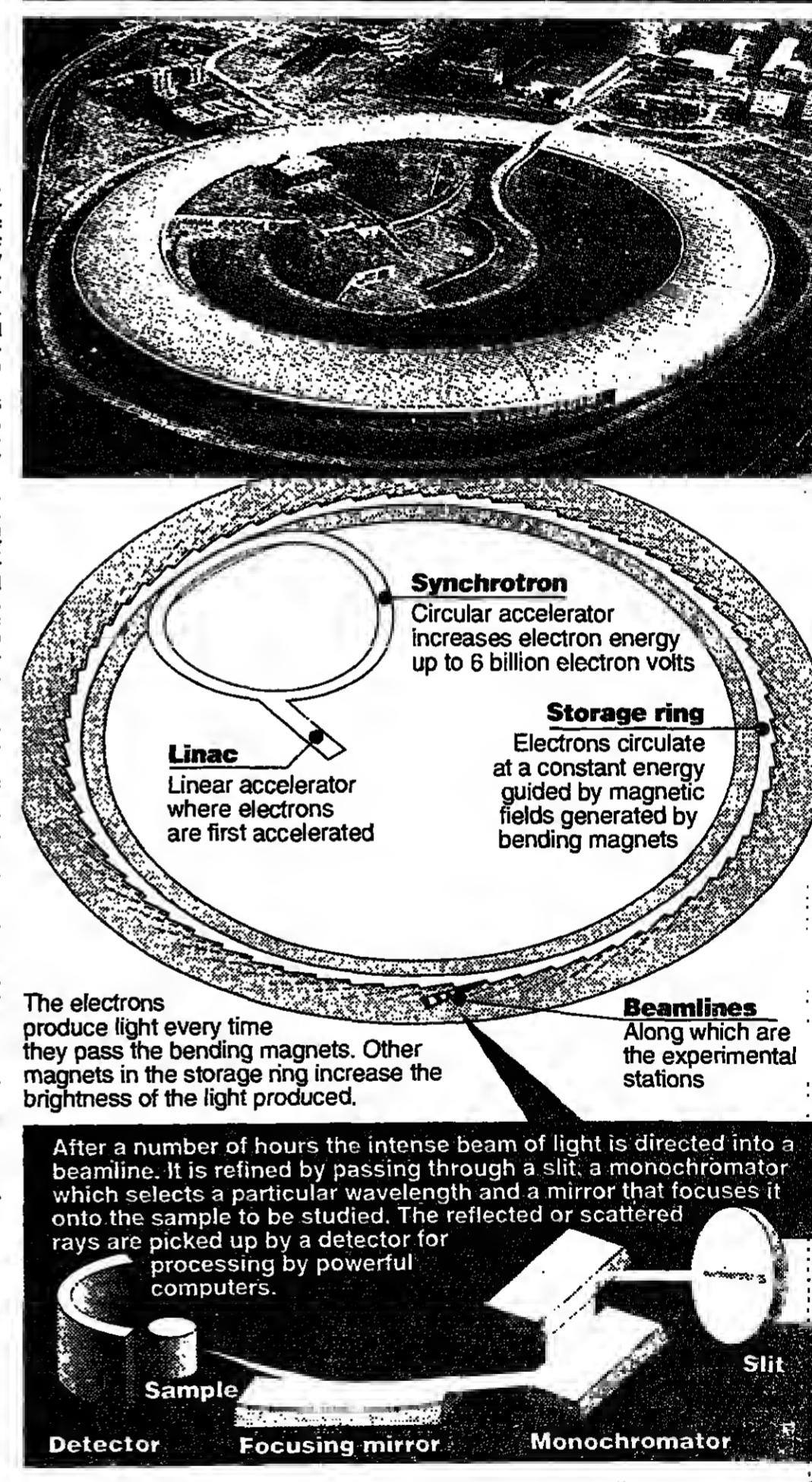
The site was chosen because it is easily accessible from most parts of Europe and already houses a branch of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory — expected to be a major user — and the Institute Laue-Langevin, whose neutron source provides a complementary service. These form a huge science campus at the confluence of the Isere and Drac rivers, with the snow-capped Alps and Chartreuse mountains behind.

The budget is fixed for 11 years until 1998 and offers a degree of financial security that is the envy of the U.S. Most of the funding has come from France and Germany; 14 per cent of the operating costs are being borne by Britain. Other countries participating are Belgium, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

At 64 workstations around the circumference, the synchrotron light emitted from the storage ring is directed into beamlines. The beam is refined by slits, by a device that selects the chosen wavelength, and by a mirror which focuses it. It then reaches the sample which may be a crystal, or cells in a test tube — and interacts with it to produce reflected or scattered rays, which are recorded by a detector. The data is processed by powerful computers.

The U.S. and Japan are both building similar synchrotrons, but they are three or more years behind Europe. "Big Science" is now so expensive that governments can no longer shoulder the cost alone. According to the magazine *Business Week*, the ESRF, which cost £450 million, would

European Synchrotron Radiation Facility



The electrons produce light every time they pass the bending magnets. Other magnets in the storage ring increase the brightness of the light produced. After a number of hours the intense beam of light is directed into a beamline. It is refined by passing through a slit, a monochromator which selects a particular wavelength and a mirror that focuses it onto the sample to be studied. The reflected or scattered rays are picked up by a detector for processing by powerful computers.

One of ESRF's users will be Professor Louise Johnson, head of medical biophysics at Oxford University. She works in structural biology, analysing molecules such as viruses.

"Using complete X-ray spectra, we'll be able to record diffraction patterns in a very short timescale, less than a millisecond, following chemical reactions in a test tube. In the first instance this gives us a deeper understanding of nature, but it also has very practical applications for AIDS."

"We can understand how why antibodies are specific. And understanding the structure of viruses we can learn how they interact with antibodies, we can understand the immune response."

"We can understand how the structure of viruses we can produce better and more logical treatments for AIDS." — The Observer

Agenda issues untouched

(Continued from page 1)

same pattern for a period of two to three weeks, he said.

Dr. Tarawneh also said that the co-sponsors had seemingly been convinced of the benefits of these consultations at this stage.

He said that every country concerned has been discussing

Save water... every drop counts!

Economy

China, Russia among main recipients of international investment — report

LONDON (AFP) — China and Russia joined the United States, Britain and Germany in 1993 as leading recipients of international investment, according to figures published by London accountants Peat Marwick.

Last year, China jumped from sixth to second place in the table of international investment, trailing the United States.

A total of \$15 billion was invested by foreign companies in China in 1993 following the \$5 billion invested in 1992 and \$3 billion in 1991.

"Foreign investment in the United States reached \$35 billion in 1993 after only \$13

billion the previous year.

China attracted one tenth of the \$152 billion made across the world in overseas capital investments in 1993, Peat Marwick said. The total level of overseas investments worldwide rose by 20 per cent from 1992, almost doubling from 1991.

Investment in Russia brought it from 17th to fifth place in the international investments table, just behind Britain and Germany.

A total of \$6.6 billion was invested in Russia by foreign firms in 1993 after \$3.9 billion invested in 1992 and \$3 billion in 1991.

"For some years now

Europe has been the target for a large proportion of all international investments, but the volume within China and Russia's vast," said Richard Agutter, head of the Peat Marwick study of mergers and acquisitions. "It remains to be seen whether recent events in Russia will impact on world attitudes."

Investment in China was boosted by the \$2.5 billion purchase of Guangdong Petrochemicals by Anglo-Dutch group Shell while investors scrambled to invest in the Russian oil and gas fields, Mr. Agutter said.

The majority of foreign investments took the form of a

minority holding in local businesses, the value of 100 per cent purchases falling in 1993 to \$64 billion from \$75 billion in 1992.

In Europe, Britain continued to attract one quarter of overseas investments (\$11 billion), ahead of Germany (\$6.7 billion) and the Netherlands and France (\$3 billion each).

U.S. companies were the largest overseas investors, making \$40 billion of investments, up from \$22 billion in 1992, with British firms second-placed on \$28 billion, up from \$9 billion the year before.

Dutch firms were third, investing \$11 billion overseas, up the accountancy group said.

from \$7 billion in 1992, while French investments slipped to \$9 billion in 1993 from \$14 billion the year before.

Italian overseas investment plunged to \$1.3 billion from \$12 billion in 1992. German and Japanese investment was also down, reflecting the slide in their economies.

Peat Marwick said the total for overseas investments would continue to grow in 1994.

The climate had been boosted by completion of the European Maastricht treaty, the Uruguay Round of world trade talks and the signing of the North America Free Trade Association (NAFTA) in 1993.

"Dutch firms were third, investing \$11 billion overseas, up the accountancy group said.

OECD: Financial aid to Russia, E. Europe falls short of promises

PARIS (AFP) — Western official aid actually paid out to Russia, other ex-Soviet republics and eastern Europe in 1991-92 fell significantly short of large commitments announced by donors in world economic fora, an OECD survey has showed.

Data collected by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) also indicated that aid from key financial powers, such as the United States and Japan, was dwarfed by contributions from Germany and the European Union as a group.

The OECD set the total amount of official aid disbursed in 1992 to the New Independent States (NIS) of the former Soviet Union and the Central and Eastern European countries (CEEC) at \$8.1 billion, marginally up from recorded disbursements of \$7.8 billion in 1991.

Germany was by far the biggest donor, accounting for \$3.9 billion or nearly half the total, followed by the United States (\$3.74 billion) and Italy (\$0.46 billion).

Tiny Austria contributed \$0.41 billion nearly twice the \$0.24 billion provided by Japan, OECD data showed.

The survey providing a first comprehensive overview of aid and other official and private flows to the NIS and CEEC states, said total net flows on a disbursement basis, mainly from the OECD area, were just above \$24.2 billion in 1992, up from \$18.6 billion in 1991.

Official aid — concessional funds for development and welfare purposes — continue to "lag far behind the large commitments announced at international conferences," the report commented.

Showing a thinly veiled reluctance to give publicity given by Group of Seven summits and other meetings for pledges of aid to the two groups of countries — including the massive aid packages offered Russia for a total of \$24 billion in 1991 and \$43 billion in 1993. The latter included a mixture of aid, debt relief, export credits and other transfers.

Russia did emerge last year as the largest recipient of aid among the NIS countries with an identified total of \$1.9 billion, but probably in fact received more than \$2 billion or about the same as Poland, the main CEEC beneficiary, the OECD said.

It said still incomplete data for 1992 indicated that private financial flows to the NIS and the CEEC countries topped \$14 billion, including about \$8.2

billion worth of export credits.

Private direct investment, at \$2.4 billion, was up from \$1.6 billion a year earlier, and other private transactions doubled to \$3.3 billion.

"Whether or not the oil price increases are rolled back, we need to put in a long-term solution now," he said in a statement. "We have to bite the real bullet. And deregulation is the word for it."

A decision late last month to impose a 15 per cent increase in fuel prices and raise power tariffs and transport fares has brought thousands of people on to the streets.

A communist urban guerrilla group bombed the offices of three oil companies last week and labour unions have called a national strike on Wednesday.

Mr. Tata said he wanted the levy replaced with a tax on affluent consumption.

President Fidel Ramos defended the government's decision to raise fuel and power rate, saying they were necessary measures to bring back the economy's good health.

Mr. Ramos appealed to Filipinos during a live television broadcast to bear with the problems caused by last week's announcement of 15 to 28 per cent rate increases on fuel and the hikes in transportation and electricity rates.

"We do not need palliatives," Mr. Ramos said. "What we need is to bring back the patient to good health...not just to get the patient out of a temporary condition without treating the real cause of the problem."

"Please have confidence in your president," he added.

Opponents of the oil price hike have accused the government of following IMF policies to raise revenues to win the fund's endorsement for its economic policies.

Mr. Ramos said the increases were necessary to finance infrastructure projects needed to sustain the fledgling economic recovery.

Filipino senator urges tax on rich, not fuel

MANILA (Agencies) — A senior Philippine senator Sunday urged the government to completely deregulate the oil industry and abolish a controversial fuel price rise that has sparked big street protests.

Senator Francisco Tatad, chairman of the Senate Energy Committee, said he would introduce legislation sweeping away state fixing of oil prices and opening up the oil industry.

"Whether or not the oil price increases are rolled back, we need to put in a long-term solution now," he said in a statement. "We have to bite the real bullet. And deregulation is the word for it."

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U.S. survey finds poor not using legal system for help

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (AP) — The poorest Americans most often don't seek needed legal help because they believe it wouldn't help — a finding American Bar Association (ABA) leaders called frightening and a national tragedy.

A national survey released Saturday by the ABA shows that 71 per cent of low-income households to have those conditions cleaned up," Ms. Lardent said. "She doesn't have to live that way."

Ms. Lardent said many poor people don't know they are entitled to free legal help. But the survey, prepared for the

ABA by the Institute for Survey Research at Temple University, shows the lack faith that the justice system could help them "even if they found a way in, even if they got free legal assistance," she said.

The legal needs survey, the first of its kind in 20 years, included telephone and in-person interviews with 1,782 low-income and 1,305 moderate-income households.

Interviews, averaging 45 minutes, were conducted over a four-month period last year, and focused on 1992.

The margin of sampling error was plus or minus three percentage points.

Indian central bank head dubs welfare programmes a failure

BOMBAY (AFP) — More than 350 million Indians lead an impoverished existence, indicating bank-funded welfare programmes to improve the lives of the poor have failed, the central bank chief has said.

Chakravarty Rangarajan said India had put in place a number of credit-based poverty-alleviation programmes funded by commercial and cooperative banks.

In 1985-90, some 86 billion rupees (\$2.86 billion) was invested by the government and the banks as subsidies and term credit in the integrated rural development programme covering some 18.2 million families.

"This has resulted in delayed and untimely credit, large-scale misuse of funds and default of credit," Mr. Rangarajan said, urging Indian bankers to improve their efficiency and cut transaction costs to show better results.

"The problem of poverty in India is immense. We have in place an organised institutional

credit system focused on providing credit to the poor. We need the evolution of appropriate mechanisms so that these programmes work," he pointed out.

Indian commercial banks are required to allot 40 per cent of their credit funds to the "priority sector," which includes agriculture and apportion 25 per cent to the poor.

New Delhi has put in place 57 major pro-poor schemes since banks were nationalised in 1969.

J.V. Shetty, chairman of the Indian Banks Association, acknowledged that "we failed somewhere" in implementing the schemes.

"Perhaps we must revamp all over schemes to make them workable," he told the seminar.

British oil output seen up 30% in '94

LONDON (R) — British North Sea oil production is expected to jump 30 per cent in 1994, analysts Wood Mackenzie have said.

The team of North Sea specialists at Wood Mackenzie said the year-on-year rise to an average 2.5 million barrels per day (b/d) from 1.92 million b/d in 1993 would be the biggest in 15 years.

British production hit a record 2.665 million barrels daily in 1986. It then declined until new, cost-cutting technology permitted more oil to be produced in the present decade. A new record may be set in the mid-1990s.

OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) says that increased supply from Britain and Norway — where output is also at a record of around 2.5 million barrels daily — was largely to blame for a drop in oil prices during 1993.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) If you consider the ideas and position of the other fellow, you find that you can quickly come to a fine understanding with those with whom you have had an argument of late.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) If you give undivided attention to business affairs at hand, you can expand as you desire. Then by taking real interest in family and good friends, you also make progress there.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Make it a point to do something nice for a higher-up that will truly please and then ingratiate yourself into the good graces of the public in general that can be helpful to you.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Wisely sticking to methods and principles that have proved successful in the past will bring even greater rewards now.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Carefully informing your associates of the expediency of own plans and ideas.

ACQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) It is important that you study and handle all financial affairs more wisely if you are to get the full benefits that are possible right now.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Fine day for sitting down with associates and discussing affair thoroughly until you reach a perfect understanding. Go to lunch, dinner, some charming spot.

THE Daily Crossword

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Hope fades for 100 missing since China ferry sank

BEIJING (R) — Hopes faded Sunday that searchers would find any of the more than 100 holidaymakers missing since their ferry sank last week in China's murky Yangtze River.

Only three bodies have been recovered downstream of southern Sichuan province's Wan county harbour where the ferry struck a barge on Feb. 1 and sank within three minutes, Xinhua News Agency reported.

More than 100 passengers, most of them rural migrant workers returning home for the Lunar New Year festival, remained missing, apparently trapped in a submerged wreckage.

Of the 77 known survivors, 18 were in hospitals and 43 were sent home with compensation of 2,500 (\$287), the official news agency said. All those hospitalised are expected to survive.

The exact number of passengers was unclear. Xinhua said 176 people were pitched into the Yangtze when the Chuanym 21 capsized and sank. The official Farmers' daily said more than 210 people had been on board.

Local officials said they had established the identities of 73 of the more than 100 missing. The cause of the collision was not disclosed.

Ozawa: Japan unprepared for Korea crisis

TOKYO (R) — A key figure in Japan's ruling coalition said Sunday Japan is ill-prepared to cope with the crisis over North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons and a looming power struggle in the maverick East Asian State.

"North Korea definitely has nuclear arms," said Ichiro Ozawa, co-leader of the Japan Renewal Party and a vigorous advocate of a stronger, more assertive Japan.

In a television interview, the coalition's chief strategist forecast convulsions in the virulently anti-Japanese state after 81-year-old Stalinist President Kim Il-Sung leaves the scene.

"It is an unbelievably fanatical society," Mr. Ozawa said.

"There will be a very dangerous situation in North Korea in the near future, and no system exists in Japan to cope with a crisis like that," Mr. Ozawa said.

North Korea claims any plans to acquire nuclear weapons but its neighbours are anxiously watching its current defiance of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) demands to inspect nuclear sites there to make sure it is telling the truth.

Without authoritative assurances from the U.N. watchdog, there is a risk that South Korea and Japan would feel it necessary to build their own nuclear deterrent.

Just last week, a London newspaper quoted a secret British government report as saying the crisis over North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes was threatening to force Tokyo to abandon its non-nuclear stance.

"The report... reveals that Japan has key bomb-making components, including plutonium and electronic triggers, and has the expertise to 'go nuclear' very quickly," the Sunday Times revealed.

The article prompted immediate denials from the Japanese government, which for 30 years has upheld the principles of banning production, possession or introduction of nuclear arms.

"It is out of the question for Japan to develop nuclear weapons," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

Nevertheless, many military experts say Japan has long had the technology to build both nuclear warheads and the missiles to deliver them.

It also has a strategic policy of stockpiling enriched plutonium for its anticipated nuclear power station needs in the 21st century.

"Japan could readily make a crude nuclear weapon," military analyst Haruo Fujii said.

Calls grow for West to act over Sarajevo massacre

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — A mortar attack on a crowded market that killed 68 people and injured nearly 200 prompted growing calls Sunday for Western intervention to stop the carnage in Bosnia.

An American transport aircraft landed at Sarajevo Airport to evacuate the wounded, U.N. sources said.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic blamed the city's Serb besiegers for the attack. His government appealed for world help to save Muslims from "slow-motion genocide."

In Munich, new U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry said the world was outraged over civilian deaths in Sarajevo and he would confer with President Bill Clinton on possible action by the U.S. to end the carnage.

"I will be leaving for Washington this afternoon to consult with President Clinton and to assess what further actions we should take," Mr. Perry told a conference on European security.

An American medical team went to one of the city's main hospitals, where local doctors were deciding which of the wounded should be airlifted out of the besieged city.

A second U.S. transport aircraft was expected to arrive later Sunday.

The Hercules aircraft, ordered in by Mr. Clinton, were expected to take wounded to a mobile army surgical hospital outside the Croatian capital of Zagreb and to a U.S. hospital near Frankfurt in Germany.

The Bosnian government declared a day of mourning for the victims of Saturday's mortar attack, the worst single atrocity in Bosnia's 22-month-old war.

At the scene of the attack, families came to lay flowers at the market place in memory of the dead. Most of the damage

had been cleared but bloodstains were still visible on the ground.

The U.N. special envoy to former Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi, and the military commander of U.N. forces in former Yugoslavia, General Jean Cot, visited the scene.

They were escorted to the site of Saturday's massacre by Sarajevo Mayor Muhammad Kresevjakovic and Bosnian Interior Minister Bakir Alispasic.

They were to meet with Bosnian leaders Sunday before heading back to Zagreb later in the afternoon.

Mr. Akashi said an investigation was underway to determine who had fired the shell that slammed into the crowded market, killing 68 and injuries 195. Many of whom are not expected to survive because of the gravity of their wounds.

He said although there were assumptions as to who was responsible, no final conclusions could yet be drawn.

The U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) said in a statement Saturday that it had "confirmed that the explosion was caused by a single 120 mm mortar bomb fired from northeast of the market."

But UNPROFOR spokesman Bill Aitken said the investigation was difficult as the shell first hit a tower without fully exploding and then crashed into the market.

France urged international action, including the use of air power, to lift the siege of Sarajevo.

Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic and U.N. Ambassador Muhammad Sacirbey, in an interview on Israel Radio, said the Muslims were facing "slow motion genocide" and demanded the world's help.

Mr. Silajdzic also demanded an emergency session of the U.N. Security Council.

International mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg were due in Belgrade for talks with Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

Despite the attack, the Bosnian Muslims said they would still attend peace talks in Geneva on Feb. 10.

Muslim political leaders signalled the bloodshed would be fresh ammunition for their campaign to have a crippling U.N. arms embargo against them lifted.

Mr. Karadzic denied responsibility for the attack. He told a news conference: "This massacre is cold-blooded murder by the Moslem leadership."

A Serb general, Mavro Milivojevic, threatened to block all U.N. aid distribution in Bosnia from Monday unless U.N. investigators agreed to a joint probe to exonerate his forces.

General Sir Michael Rose, the new UNPROFOR chief, has repudiated a Serb denial that they carried out a mortar attack that killed nine Muslims in a food queue in Sarajevo Friday.

The highest previous death toll in a single incident in the city — 16 dead in a bread queue mortar attack in May 1992 — prompted the U.N. to impose sanctions on Serb-led Yugoslavia.

Mr. Perry said Sunday: "I will be leaving for Washington this afternoon to consult with President Clinton and to assess what further actions we should take," Mr. Perry told a conference on European security.

"I will be leaving for Washington this afternoon to consult with President Clinton and to assess what further actions we should take," Mr. Perry told a conference on European security.

"Meantime, we are in close contact with our allies and the United Nations," he said of the artillery attack on the market place in Sarajevo at a conference on European security.

In Rome, even Pope John Paul appeared to move closer to support for military intervention in Bosnia Saturday in an emotional condemnation

of the attack.

His voice breaking, the 73-year-old Pontiff branded the attack "a massacre... by criminal bands (which) continue systematically to slaughter and destroy" and said they would answer before God.

Muslim political leaders signalled the bloodshed would be fresh ammunition for their campaign to have a crippling U.N. arms embargo against them lifted.

Survivors and police, many weeping and vomiting, tried to separate the living from the dead among a mass of mangled bodies strewn between market stalls in the city centre.

"These are not the people — it's minced meat," a distraught man screamed amid the devastation.

In Washington, Mr. Clinton called on the U.N. to identify those responsible for the onslaught and directed Secretary of State Warren Christopher to consult with U.S. allies on "appropriate next steps."

Mr. Christopher said after meeting Mr. Clinton he did not rule out air strikes against those deemed responsible for the attack.

A senior administration official said the U.S. had "very little doubt" that the Serbs were responsible for the attack, but the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) said its experts had not been able to come to a clear conclusion.

UNPROFOR military experts, after analysing the crater, have not so far been able to determine with certainty the exact origin of launch of the mortar," a U.N. statement said.

In Rome, even Pope John Paul appeared to move closer to support for military intervention in Bosnia Saturday in an emotional condemnation



Evacuation personnel evacuate the bodies of Sarajevo killed when a shell hit the Bosnian capital's main market Saturday (AFP photo)

Russia 'outraged'

Russia said Sunday it was outraged by a mortar attack on the crowded Sarajevo market and said those who carried it out should be severely punished.

ITAR-TASS News Agency quoted a Foreign Ministry statement as calling for a swift investigation to determine who was responsible for Saturday's shelling.

"We are outraged by the terrorist act in Sarajevo which has caused the deaths of dozens of people in this much-suffering city," the statement said.

"Those guilty of this evil act, whoever they are, should be severely punished," it added.

Mandela's convoy crashes through homeland roadblocks

THABA NCHU, South Africa (AFP) — The motorcade of African National Congress (ANC) President Nelson Mandela crashed through two roadblocks in Bophuthatswana black homeland Sunday as heavily armed police tried to stop him entering the semi-independent territory.

At one of the checkpoints ANC bodyguards drew hand-guns but jumped back in their vehicles when the homeland police did not retaliate.

A Bophuthatswana Defence Force colonel told AFP that because the ANC had not contacted homeland authorities about the visit, they would stop him from entering the semi-independent territory.

ANC National Executive Committee member Terror Lekota said after the incident that homeland police had "told us to stop. But we decided to drive through."

On entering a part of the fragmented homeland, some 80 kilometres west of the Orange Free State provincial capital Bloemfontein, armed police ordered the cavalcade to stop. But Mr. Mandela's armoured Mercedes limousine sped on.

He said if the government would not act against the white extremists, "Then the ANC will have to take steps even before the (April 26-28) election."

Mr. Mandela was commenting on a spate of 29 bombings since the beginning of December against ANC offices, homes of ANC officials, electricity pylons and railway lines.

The ANC is also prevented

from operating in the homeland, which is split into several parts across Orange Free State and Western Transvaal provinces.

Mr. Mandela wanted to traverse through part of the homeland in order to reach Tweespruit, in southern Orange Free State, to address an election rally of farm labourers.

Police stopped journalists and searched their cars, seizing an audio cassette from a reporter working for South African police.

After the meeting in Tweespruit, Mr. Mandela travelled back into the homeland to reach a hill where an ANC president of the early 1950s, James Moroka, was buried.

Mr. Mandela warned South Africa's white extremists Sunday that the ANC could retaliate within weeks if its offices continued to be bombed.

"We cannot allow the right-wing to destroy our offices and the homes of our members," Mr. Mandela told a breakfast with journalists in Bloemfontein.

He said if the government would not act against the white extremists, "Then the ANC will have to take steps even before the (April 26-28) election."

Mr. Mandela was commenting on a spate of 29 bombings since the beginning of December against ANC offices, homes of ANC officials, electricity pylons and railway lines.

U.S. steps up push for world population control

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Clinton administration is offering a substantial increase in spending for population control and a new strategy that emphasizes improving the status of women as a way to hold down global birth rates.

"If we can't stabilize the world's population, we're not going to be able to control any other problems," said State Department counselor Tim Wirth, who is in charge of population policy.

The 1995 budget President Bill Clinton announces Monday will include \$585 million in population control assistance, up from about \$503 million this year, according to administration officials.

The administration also is teaming up with Japan to boost aid for population stabilisation programmes in poor countries.

When Japan's Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa visits Washington later this week, he and Mr. Clinton will announce an accord on population assistance. Japan is expected to

commit \$3 billion by the end of the decade for population programmes combating AIDS in developing countries, administration officials said. They spoke on condition of anonymity.

Experts project today's worldwide population of 5.5 billion will grow by 1 billion over the next decade, and double to 11 billion in 40 years.

By 2050, it will reach 12 billion, with more than 90 percent of the growth occurring in developing nations.

Today's U.S. population of 259 million, growing at a slower rate, is projected to reach 397 million by 2050.

The Clinton administration has decided that stabilising population is crucial to alleviating poverty and hunger. This contrasts with the policies of the Reagan and Bush administrations, which emphasised population aid by lumping it with politically charged abortion controversies.

China nabs officials who used hookers as bait

BEIJING (R) — Police arrested 15 Communist Party officials who sent prostitutes into hotels and then fined guests caught consorting with them, an official newspaper said. The corrupt cadres of Wannan County in the coastal Jiangxi province squeezed \$40,000 in fines from entrapped suspects in the illegal scheme, the Liaoning Legal News said in editions reaching Beijing Sunday. "The officials and the prostitutes worked together to force the girls' customers to confess their whoring, then hit them with excessive fines," the newspaper said. The 15 officials pocketed the proceeds after paying off the prostitutes and compliant hoteliers.

ABC, Roseanne Arnold clash over series kiss

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A kiss is not just a kiss. Not when it involves Roseanne Arnold and Mariel Hemingway. ABC is refusing to air an episode of Ms. Arnold's hit sitcom "Roseanne" because it shows the two women exchanging a kiss in a gay bar. The episode was slated to air March 1, said Tom Arnold, Roseanne's husband. Arnold said he was told by Steve Weissman, senior vice president and general counsel of ABC Inc., that the scene "is not the lifestyle that most people lead." Arnold's remarks were reported Sunday by the Los Angeles daily news. ABC spokeswoman Sherrie Berger said the network had no comment on the issue. In the episode, Roseanne Conner goes to the bar with bisexual friend Nancy (Sandra Bernhard). Roseanne dances with a woman (Hemingway); kisses — and then has to explain plain things to husband Dan (John Goodman). The Arnolds are executive producers of the series, now in its sixth season. Arnold said "Roseanne" producers submitted the gay bar story line two weeks ago to ABC, which rejected it. He said he refused when ABC officials asked him to replace the kissing scene.

Jackson reportedly plans legal bid to silence Latoya

LONDON (R) — American pop superstar Michael Jackson was reported Sunday to be planning a legal bid to stop his sister Latoya making sensational new claims about his sex life. Britain's Sunday Mirror newspaper, claiming a world exclusive, said Jackson intended to launch a £300 million (\$446 million) lawsuit claiming defamation of character against his older sister and her husband within the next month. The newspaper said he also intends to hit back by leaking scandalous stories about Latoya, 36, involving plastic surgery and her sex life. Jackson last month made an out-of-court settlement reputed to run between \$5 and \$25 million to a 14-year-old boy who had accused him of molestation. Jackson's lawyers say the settlement is not an admission of guilt and that the singer continues to maintain his innocence. Latoya Jackson has been among the least supportive of Jackson's family during his highly public ordeal, telling a news conference in Israel that she believed the charges levelled against her brother. The Sunday Mirror said Jackson had been persuaded to counter-attack by his mother Katherine as part of a plan to restore his image.

Grand jury to hear testimony in Jackson case

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A Santa Barbara County grand jury will hear testimony this week about allegations that Michael Jackson molested a 13-year-old boy, the Los Angeles Times said. Subpoenas have been delivered to witnesses, but neither Jackson nor the boy were summoned, according to unidentified sources, the paper said. The grand jury will determine whether there is enough evidence for an indictment. Jackson, 35, denies any wrongdoing. A person at the district attorney's office in Santa Barbara said no one would come forward until Monday. Jackson's attorney Howard Weitzman didn't immediately return a phone call for comment. Criminal investigations were under way in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara counties because Jackson has houses there.

Sports

Tomba takes charge in World Cup slalom

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN, Germany (AP) — Alberto Tomba seized control of a World Cup slalom Sunday with a masterly first-leg run as ski racing returned to Garmisch-Partenkirchen for the first time since the death of Ulrike Maier.

The Italian, who collected his third slalom victory of the season in Chamonix last Sunday, looked set for his fourth after thoroughly dominating proceedings in the opening skirmish.

The slalom was the lone man's race at this meeting after a downhill planned for Saturday was called off for safety reasons in the wake of former world champion Maier's death in a downhill the previous Saturday.

Tomba, the number one starter, clocked 45.95 seconds on the 58-gate Gudiherg

course, a different slope from the one on which Maier had her fatal accident.

Finn-Christer Jagge, who beat Tomba for his 1992 Olympic slalom title, was second-fastest home in 46.16 but hooked a gate on the way down and was ruled out for the second leg.

Fellow Norwegian Kjetil Andre Aamodt, reigning slalom world champion, failed to finish, while overall World Cup champion Marc Girardelli of Luxembourg continued his wretched slalom run with a first-leg time nearly three seconds behind Tomba.

Sweden's Tomas Fogdor, second to Tomba in Chamonix, was the only racer with a valid time within a second of the Italian, clocking 46.67.

Austria's Thomas Stangasser, winner of two World Cup slaloms this season, was next-fastest in 47.04.

German Gerg wins super-G; Schneider takes overall lead

SIERRA NEVADA, Spain (AP) — German 18-year-old Hilde Gerg grabbed her first World Cup win Sunday in the super-G, and Swiss Vreni Schneider finished 13th to pick up enough points to take the lead in the overall World Cup standings from season-long rival Pernilla Viberg of Sweden.

The 13th place finish gave Schneider 20 points and an overall total of 1,210 points — a mere point ahead Viberg with 1,209. Viberg skied but did not earn points in the super-G, which closed Spain's World Cup.

The youngest member of the German women's ski team and one of the team's coming stars, Gerg said she was shocked by her victory. She won in a time

of 1:47.80, nipping Italian 18-year-old Isolde Kostner in second in 1:48.30. Gerg's roommate Katharina Gutensohn of Germany was third in 1:48.91.

Gerg was the fourth different winner in four super-G races this season.

"I can't believe it, I can't believe it," said Gerg, whose previous best in any World Cup race was a sixth place finish in super-G in Corina D'Ampezzo, Italy, last month. "I guess I wasn't too bad."

"I had a good feeling because it was a nice day but I never dreamed I'd win," added Gerg, who is in her first full season on the circuit and suffered a foot injury just before the season started.

Rosset wins Marseille Open

MARSEILLE, France (AFP) — Switzerland's Marc Rosset overpowered Frenchman Amaud Boetsch 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/4) to win the ATP tennis tournament here for the second year running Sunday.

Rosset, the Olympic champion in Barcelona, notched his seventh ATP tournament victory, while battling Boetsch was left to regret his performance at the crucial points.

The lanky Swiss signalled his intentions in the very first game, blasting down two aces — one of them on a second service. His fine serves were Rosset's major weapon, and

the Frenchman was always struggling to cope.

In the first tie-break, Boetsch sent a forehand too long and weathered three set points before finally handing Rosset the set with a double fault.

But he refused to give up, and broke Rosset for the first time in the second set with a superb passing shot, only to lose his own service for 3-3.

France's number two player had his chance to level the game as he led 6-5. But instead went into a tie-break, where Rosset proved yet again to be the stronger of the two.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♦QT4 ♣AK543 ♠A432 Partner opens the bidding with four spades. What action do you take?
A.—Our spade suit, especially the 100 honors, is appealing. However, that doesn't mean we're prepared to give up on the possibility of a 4-4, or better, fit in hearts. Therefore, we should make a takeout double, intending to correct to spades with a three-card response by partner.

Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦AQ4 ♦QT4 ♣Q963 Partner opens the bidding with one spade. What do you respond?
A.—There are three choices, each of which will have some adherents. The two we like least are one no trump, the hand isn't strong enough and pass (we do have five-card support for partner's suit). That leaves two diamonds as this department's choice.

Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦K94 ♦A53 ♦A83 ♦J865 The bidding has proceeded: West North East South West 1 0 1 0 ? What action do you take?
A.—There are three choices, each of which will have some adherents. The two we like least are one no trump, the hand isn't strong enough and pass (we do have five-card support for partner's suit). That leaves two diamonds as this department's choice.

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦AKQ103 ♦A742 ♦K5 ♦Q8 The bidding has proceeded: West North East South 1 0 1 0 ? Pass Pass ? Do you rebid?
A.—If you have any excuse at all, don't let the opponents play at the one-level, but that doubleton queen in their suit is a warning. Pass. All too often an ill-advised re-opening bid will allow the enemy to bounce into game and not necessarily in opener's suit.

Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with a weak two diamonds. What action do you take?

A.—At the one-level your partner must surely have a self-sufficient suit to preempt at the four-level. So slam should be merely a question of whether partner has an ace. Blackwood will provide the answer. Bid four no trump. As long as partner shows one, six hearts is unlikely to depend on more than a finesse.

Q.5—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦QJ654 ♦Q94 ♦QJ652 ♦Q866 The bidding has proceeded: North East South West 1 0 1 0 ? What action do you take?

A.—There are three choices, each of which will have some adherents. The two we like least are one no trump, the hand isn't strong enough and pass (we do have five-card support for partner's suit).

That leaves two diamonds as this department's choice.

Q.6—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦KJ654 ♦Q92 0 108 ♦Q8765 The bidding has proceeded: West North East South 1 0 1 0 ? Pass Pass ? Do you rebid?

A.—If you have any excuse at all, don't let the opponents play at the one-level, but that doubleton queen in their suit is a warning. Pass. All too often an ill-advised re-opening bid will allow the enemy to bounce into game and not necessarily in opener's suit.

Q.7—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦K94 ♦A53 ♦A83 ♦J865 The bidding has proceeded: West North East South 1 0 1 0 ? Pass Pass ? Do you rebid?

A.—If you have any excuse at all, don't let the opponents play at the one-level, but that doubleton queen in their suit is a warning. Pass. All too often an ill-advised re-opening bid will allow the enemy to bounce into game and not necessarily in opener's suit.

Q.8—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦AKQ103 ♦A742 ♦K5 ♦Q8 The bidding has proceeded: West North East South 1 0 1 0 ? Pass Pass ? Do you rebid?

A.—If you have any excuse at all, don't let the opponents play at the one-level, but that doubleton queen in their suit is a warning. Pass. All too often an ill-advised re-opening bid will allow the enemy to bounce into game and not necessarily in opener's suit.

U.S. beset by double woes before Lillehammer Games

LILLEHAMMER (R) — The U.S. squad, beset by tragedy and controversy before the Olympics start, drew some comfort Sunday from the news skater Elizabeth Punzalan wants to honour her murdered father by competing at the Olympics despite the tragedy.

Police said Punzalan's brother Ricky would be charged with the crime.

In a statement made available in Lillehammer Sunday, Punzalan said she intended to compete at the Olympics despite the tragedy.

"My father was proud of my skating achievements and would have wanted me to go to Lillehammer," she said.

"I will try to skate my best there in his memory."

Condron said the media attention on both the Punzalan and Harding stories had been intense for the U.S. skating team.

"It's been incredible," he said. "Those people are operating on not much sleep and a whole lot of patience. They just try to do the best they can in a situation that doesn't come up once in a lifetime."

American skating has had more than its share of tragedy down the years.

Millions shared the agony when speed skater Dan Jansen set off in the 500 metres at the 1988 Calgary Games just hours after learning his sister had died of leukaemia. He

crashed on the first bend. He also fell in the 1,000 metres.

This time, he looks likely to put that and a disappointing performance in the 1992 Albertville Games behind him and bag two or even three gold medals.

Conditions at the speed skating rink at Hamar, 50 kilometres south of Lillehammer, are almost universally judged excellent and world records are likely.

Outside, the temperature hovers around -13 Celsius and light snow overnight added to the work of Lillehammer road clearers. Snow on the rooftops is about a metre deep.

The flow of athletes and delegations arriving is beginning to increase.

Jamaica, Liechtenstein and Sweden are due at Lillehammer Sunday to join 33 delegations already installed at the site. Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic, and New Zealand will take part in the first flag-raising ceremony there.

On Monday, Lillehammer organisers will start broadcasting news in four languages and music on a special Olympic radio station.

Graf sweeps past Navratilova, captures Pan Pacific title

TOKYO (R) — Top seed Steffi Graf swept aside defending champion Martina Navratilova Sunday to win the \$750,000 Toray Pan Pacific Open.

The world number one, fresh from the victory in last week's Australian Open which gave her a non-calender year Grand Slam, outplayed the veteran Czech-born American 6-2 6-4 on the fast carpet surface at the Tokyo metropolitan gymnasium.

"I served well and kept her from coming in," an elated Graf said. "If you get a short ball against her you've got to come in before her or else she'll come in. So I forced her to play long and she made more errors."

It was sweet revenge for the German, champion here in 1986 and 1990, after losing to Navratilova in the semifinals here in 1993. Their career record against each other now stands at nine wins apiece over nine years.

"She didn't play as well as she did last year," said Graf, who has not dropped a single set on the way to winning her first two tournaments of 1994.

"Today didn't go as well as I'd have liked," said Navratilova, the 37-year-old world number three. "I made some errors I normally wouldn't have made, but I attribute that to Steffi putting on a lot of pressure."

The American failed to capitalise on three break points in the first set, hitting short balls which allowed Graf to storm the net and hold serve and break her in the fifth and seventh games.

"Once she got rolling, I had a hard time trying to catch up," said Navratilova. Graf achieved an 82 per cent success rate with her first serve, clocking up to 168 kilometres per hour.

Sunday's loss deprived second-seeded Navratilova, now in the final season of her 19-year career, of a sentimental title win.



Steffi Graf

Graf played an aggressive, intense match from the outset, seizing every opportunity to storm the net and whipping sizzling forehand winners past a frequently wrong-footed Navratilova.

The second set followed a similar pattern. Graf converted her only break point in the fifth game and never looked back. She won her last service game to love.

It was Graf's second destruction in eight days of one of her closest challengers for world supremacy in the absence of Monica Seles.

She routed Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, currently ranked number two, in the Australian Open final in Melbourne.

Sunday's win in Asia's most prestigious women's tournament earned the 34-year-old multi-millionaire a cheque for \$150,000.

"I hope this won't be the last time I play Steffi," Navratilova told the sell-out crowd. "It's always a pleasure to be on the same court as a champion."

Navratilova had little time to mourn her disappointment.

She was back on court almost immediately, teaming up with Marion Bolegraf of the Netherlands against her old American doubles partner Pam Shriver and Australia's Elizabeth Smylie.

Navratilova and Bolegraf bowed out to the third seeds 3-6 6-3 6-7.

Sampdoria go on 6-goal rampage

MILAN, Italy (AP) — Sampdoria went on a six-goal rampage against Udinese Sunday to turn the heat on Italian leaders AC Milan.

Sampdoria won 6-2 in a home triumph that took them to 30 points. Two behind Milan, who were playing a late evening game at AS Roma.

Third-placed Juventus dropped back after a disappointing goalless visit to lowly Reggiana left them a further point adrift.

"We feel it's our duty to continue. We knew it would be difficult. What happened yesterday in a horrifying way illustrates it."

Roberto Mancini made it

four before Udinese, 14th in the serie A table, pulled two back to suggest a comeback.

That was quickly snuffed out, however, by Sampdoria's fifth with Mancini adding the icing with another penalty 20 minutes from the end.

Inter Milan, in sixth, were leapfrogged by visitors Lazio, who won an extraordinary encounter 3-1, with two goals in the final three minutes.

Inter had led through a goal inside the first half-hour from Uruguayan Ruben Sosa and looked sure of the points until

Parma, on 29 points alongside Juventus, kept up their momentum with a 2-1 win at Torino, helped by an Andrea Fortunato own goal. They beat Milan in midweek to lift the European Super Cup.

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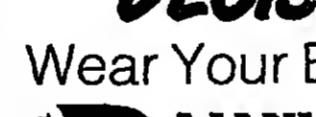
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Brunei sultan ends Iran visit

TEHRAN (R) — The sultan of Brunei, Hassan Al Bolkiyah, ended a visit to Iran on Sunday as the two countries called for more cultural trade and for lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia's Muslims. The sultan told reporters at the airport that his four-day trip to Iran had been "successful" and said he was "very satisfied" with his talks, Tebran Radio said. Iranian President Ayatollah Khomeini Rafsanjani, accompanying the sultan to the airport, said the two countries had learned of their potential for future cooperation and the president planned a visit to Brunei. The two countries issued a joint statement calling for cooperation in economic, trade, cultural and scientific fields. The visit has "opened a new chapter in relations" between Iran and Brunei and could lead to further trade between the two countries and joint investments, the statement said.

Ruling party wins Mauritania local polls

NOUAKCHOTT (R) — Mauritania's ruling party has shrugged aside its first poll challenge by the opposition, taking the vast majority of seats in local government elections. An Interior Ministry statement broadcast on state radio Saturday night said President Maouya Ould Sidahmed Taya's Republican Democratic and Social Party took a majority of the 11 districts contested in the day's second-round voting, capping its Jan. 31 first-round landslide in 163 of 197 districts. It did not give a breakdown of the second-round results. Neither the main opposition Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) nor the smaller Union for Democracy and Progress (UDP) ran in the West African country's first multi-party presidential election in January 1992 or parliamentary polls in March the same year. Mr. Ould Taya, who took power in a 1984 army coup, won a six-year term in the 1992 election which the opposition said was rigged.

Kurdish politician shot in Turkey

ISTANBUL (R) — Unidentified gunmen shot and slightly wounded a leading Kurdish politician in the Turkish capital Ankara early Sunday. Kanal 6 television reported. Quoting security officials, Kanal 6 said Murat Bozak, secretary general of the pro-Kurdish Democracy Party (DEP), was hit by two bullets when he opened the door to his house to unknown visitors in suburban Kocaeli after midnight. Police said the assailants fled. Hospital officials said Mr. Bozak was in good condition and recovering from his wounds. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. Kurdish newspaper editors said attacks had bombed two suburban DEP buildings and offices of several Kurdish businessmen in Ankara in the past month. DEP holds 18 seats in Turkey's 450-member national assembly and is the sixth biggest political grouping. Guerrillas of the banned Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) are waging a separatist war in southeast Turkey. More than 10,000 people have been killed in the conflict since 1984.

Chief Israeli rabbi may meet Castro

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau said he may meet Cuban President Fidel Castro during a two-day visit to Cuba starting Sunday. "From one source I have such a surprising message that when the man (Castro) heard an Israeli chief rabbi was interested in coming to the island... he expressed his wish to come to me to meet face-to-face and talk," Mr. Lau told Israel Radio on Sunday by telephone from the United States. Cuba has no formal ties with Israel. Mr. Lau said a main purpose of his trip was to visit the remnants of Cuba's Jewish community, which has dwindled from 12,000 to 1,000 because of emigration and assimilation since Mr. Castro's 1959 revolution.

'Jewish' bananas spark row in Egypt's parliament

CAIRO (AP) — Deputies had to restrain a colleague as he tried to thump another deputy who called the ruling party "Jews" for praising Israel's help in growing Egyptian bananas and apples, newspapers reported Sunday. The row broke out as Agriculture Minister Yusef Wali, vice chairman of the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP), said Saturday his sector had benefited from Israeli know-how and technology. Nasserite opposition deputy Diabeddin Daud argued, however, that cooperation with Israel had only led to lower production levels, charging that Israeli insecticides were damaging Egyptian crops. Mr. Wali caused an uproar in opposition ranks by counteracting that "the improvement in the quality of bananas and apples is thanks to our cooperation with Israel." An independent, Tawfiq Zaghloul, attacked NDP members who sided with the minister and called them Jews. An indignant Essam Sultan of the NDP immediately rose to his feet, took off his jacket and squared up to throw a punch at Mr. Zaghloul. But he was restrained by his colleagues. Egypt in 1979 became the first Arab state to make peace with Israel.

Pakistan's illegal opium crop destroyed

ISLAMABAD (R) — Prolonged drought has destroyed most of Pakistan's huge illegal opium crop and Interior Minister Nasrullah Khan Babar thanked God on Sunday for His help. "This was help from God but we will not pray for it to come again because it also destroys other crops," he told a news conference. "But after this we will take other measures to eliminate the poppy." The drought has destroyed about 80 per cent of the poppy crop from which opium is produced in the semi-autonomous North West Frontier tribal region bordering Afghanistan. Mr. Babar said, Heroin, derived from the opium with simple equipment known locally as "bathtub factories," flooded Western markets in the 1980s, with the Afghan-Pakistan border area eclipsing traditional supplies from the Golden Triangle in South-East Asia. The minister gave no estimate of this year's opium production, which he said was about 180 tonnes last year compared with a peak of 800 tonnes when Pakistan became a major source of heroin smuggled to Western countries.

4 soldiers hurt in IRA attack

BELFAST (AP) — Four soldiers were hospitalised after an IRA mortar hit their patrol vehicle early Sunday. Three soldiers were hit by shrapnel, but their wounds are not life threatening, police said. A fourth was treated for shock. The mortar was hidden in bushes on the outskirts of West Belfast and triggered by remote control. "It is a type of weapon the IRA has used in previous attacks," a police spokesman said, requesting customary anonymity. Irish Republican Army (IRA) has frequently targeted soldiers and police in its violent campaign to end British rule in Northern Ireland.

1950s H-bomb fallout sent to U.K.

LONDON (R) — The British government smuggled radioactive debris from hydrogen bomb tests in the 1950s back to London in diplomatic bags carried on ordinary passenger airlines, the Observer newspaper said Sunday. Citing what it said were newly-released official papers, the Observer said that debris from the early nuclear tests on Christmas Island in the Pacific was secreted, loaded onto scheduled flights on Australia's Qantas Airline. The dust was examined at Britain's top secret atomic weapons research establishment at Aldermaston. Military flights had been abandoned because of the costs involved, the Observer said. The newspaper said that although the H-bomb dust was sealed in cans, placed in polythene bags and loaded into lead-lined boxes before being despatched under diplomatic cover, it was impossible to know whether innocent Qantas passengers and crew were exposed to radiation. However it said the courier who accompanied the first diplomatic bag from Christmas Island in 1957 died from two different types of cancer in 1991.

Gulf Muslims angry over Sarajevo deaths

DUBAI (Agencies) — Gulf Muslims reacted in anger on Sunday to the killing of 66 Bosnian Muslims in a mortar attack in Sarajevo and demanded immediate action by Islamic countries to help co-religionists in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Newspapers in Gulf Arab states, which have donated millions of dollars to Bosnian Muslims, said the world's reluctance to end the plight of Bosnian Muslims was a conspiracy against Islam.

Film of the devastation in a Sarajevo market where mortars, presumably Serbian, killed 66 people on Saturday were prominently shown on television screens around the region.

A prominent Kuwaiti statesman, Abdul Rahman Al Awadi, wrote in the United Arab Emirates newspaper Al Khaleej: "If the Muslims don't move now... then I don't know when we will."

He said Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic "has clearly said and in a loud voice we don't want money we want weapons to defend ourselves but despite all the statements... and meetings... we have not seen anything."

He attacked the 51-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which is spearheading Muslim efforts to support Bosnian Muslims. "It is as if the OIC was only formed to hold meetings and spend millions on the meetings," Mr. Awadi said.

His comments reflect rising anger at the failure of Islamic states to provide effective help to fellow Muslims in Bosnia-



A morgue attendant checks one of the bodies laid out at a Sarajevo hospital late Saturday after

a shell landed in the city's crowded marketplace, killing at least 66 people (AFP photo)

Herzegovina. Muslim states have been donating money and relief aid, but none have so far officially responded to Bosnian Muslim appeals for military help.

Diplomats say the Muslim man-in-the-street was increasingly frustrated at the West's failure to support Bosnia's Muslims, but Islamic governments were unwilling to take any action outside the international consensus.

The Bosnian president appealed to the world on Saturday to rescue Bosnia's Muslims or become an accomplice in war crimes. He urged Muslim states, Russia and the heads of the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the

European Union to intervene against Serbs in Bosnia or lift the arms embargo on its Muslims.

In the Saudi capital Riyadh, more than 15 million Saudi riyals (\$4 million) in donations to Bosnian Muslims were collected on Saturday, the first day of a week-long drive to raise funds.

The Saudi Press agency quoted Prince Satam Ben Abdul Aziz, vice president of a special committee on Bosnia, as urging Saudis to donate more to their fellow Muslims "so they can face their enemies and restore their usurped rights."

The Saudi Al Jazeera newspaper attacked the U.N. Security Council saying that its

resolutions were ineffective. Qatar's Al Sharq newspaper said the world community, by limiting itself to statements of condemnation, has encouraged the Serb aggressors to continue their barbaric actions.

The United Nations has proved its total incompetence to do anything to restore the rights to their owners... listening to all the condemnation statements is making the honorable people feel sick and desperate," it said.

Qatar's Al Arab daily said: "What is happening is a conspiracy against Islam and the more the Islamic World keeps silent the more it will help the killing and annihilation of Muslims."

Israeli health minister resigns

TEL AVIV (AP) — Health Minister Haim Ramon resigned Sunday after Labour Party apparatchiks blocked his attempt to reform Israel's health system.

"I told the cabinet that I can no longer take responsibility for the health system," Mr. Ramon said on Israel Radio. The resignation, made in writing and read out by Mr. Ramon at the weekly cabinet session, goes into effect Tuesday.

Mr. Ramon's proposal, similar to that being drawn up by the Clinton administration, aimed at guaranteeing citizens basic medical services regardless of income or employment status.

"I am obligated to the voter, to the public and also to myself," Mr. Ramon said. "If I did not do what I did today I would find it very hard to live with myself."

The media has speculated that Mr. Ramon will be offered a different portfolio in the cabinet, but the outgoing minister said he had been given no assurances and could very well remain only a legislator in parliament.

Mr. Ramon's proposal was presented in parliament as a health insurance bill that easily passed the first of the three needed votes. Last week the cabinet withdrew the proposal after the ruling Labour Party came under fire from the Histadrut trade union.

Histadrut, which represents 60 per cent of the two million member work force, owns Kupat Holim Clalit, the country's largest health plan that relies on government handouts to stay afloat. Most of Histadrut's officials are members of the Labour Party.

Mr. Ramon's plan, that would require Israelis to pay a health tax of 4.8 per cent of their income, would have cut subsidies to the Kupat Holim and undercut the Histadrut, jeopardising them both.

Israelis presently pay a similar amount, an average of about \$650 annually, to various health funds that run clinics and fund hospitalisation in some cases. But the funds are not required to accept all applicants and an estimated 350,000 Israelis are uninsured.

The demise of the health bill was seen as a personal defeat for Mr. Ramon, a leader of Labour's free market oriented young guard, and a set back for efforts to reform still dominant socialist holdovers from Zionism's early days, such as the Histadrut.

COLUMN

Doctor ordered to pay \$5,000 over prank

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A surgeon was ordered to pay a nurse \$5,000 for shooting a surgical staple into her buttocks as she stooped to count sponges on an operating room floor. Lola Simpson said she was less interested in the just award than in bringing Dr. James Bennett to task for the 1990 incident at Children's Hospital. She said Dr. Bennett called the incident a "joke," but he could have spread infection from the patient to her. Dr. Bennett had just finished stapling the hip of a boy being prepared for surgery when Nurse Simpson bent down to count sponges. Dr. Bennett turned the stapling gun on her.

"There was a nice muscular man standing next to him in the operation room, but he didn't think to do that to him," Nurse Simpson said. Dr. Bennett's attorney said the surgeon turned the stapling gun on her.

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Teen murders grandparents over beer dispute

ROME (AP) — Missing One wooden statue of infant Jesus, 600 years old, suspects: None. More than 100 officers from a special art theft squad are turning Rome inside out looking for the stolen icon, believed miraculously by countless numbers of worshipers over the centuries. There have been no good clues, only sobs and prayers at the scene of the crime: A hilltop church where the beloved statue was kept before it disappeared late Tuesday. "I feel like I lost my own son," Moaned Francesca Ricci Saturday, stroking the base of the gilded case where the Bambino, or little baby, rested. Every year, tens of thousands of people visit the small side chapel in the Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary's in Aracoeli to view the jewel-covered statue, carved from an olive tree in the Garden of Gethsemane in Jerusalem.

Letters to the Bambino surround its case. The two-foot (60-centimetre) medieval icon is especially dear to new mothers, who bring their infants to the statue for a blessing of good health; Rome Mayor Francesco Rutelli called the theft "an insult to the heart of Rome."

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RIO RANCHO, NM (R) — A 16-year-old New Mexico boy and two of his friends were being held after confessing to the stabbing deaths of the boy's 80-year-old grandparents in a dispute over beer, police said Saturday. Ed and Marie Brown were killed after Marie Brown told her grandson she did not want him drinking his grandfather's beer at their home. Lieutenant Robert Force of the Rio Rancho Police Department said, Rio Rancho is a suburb of Albuquerque. Michael Brown, 16, who lived with his grandparents, left with his two friends, Bernadette Setser, 16, and Jeremy Rose, 17, after the argument, and then all three returned later, police said. The teenagers had been drinking, Lt. Force said, and they committed the murders after listening to an audiotape by "Gangsta" rapper Snoop Doggy Dog that included songs titled *Murder Was The Case* and *Serial Killers*.

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